

Newcomers at Xiaoyun Lu offer hot food to please a variety of taste buds and pocketbooks. **Page 14**



The occupants of a tomb recently discovered near the ruins of the ancient kingdom of Loulan may have been nobles. **Page 10**



At the age of seven, Chen Shan was already a regular cinemagoer. **Page 9**



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## Countering the Counterfeiters

By Xiao Rong

The arrest of one of China's most high profile counterfeit investigators in Beijing on March 12 has brought the industry into disrepute.

Zang Jiaping is accused by the Haidian District Procuratorate of extorting 75,000 yuan from a producer of allegedly fake medicine in Shaanxi Province.

"The medicine that Zang was investigating was certainly fake. Several of us have helped him in the case," Liu Dianlin, another counterfeit investigator from Guangzhou, told *Beijing Today*. But he added that if Zang is guilty, he should be punished, "Even if our motives are decent, the means of investigation should always be lawful."

Another professional investigator of fake products, Zhang Lei from Wuhan, told *Beijing Today*, "No matter which way people take in fighting against counterfeit products, whether as an individual or a corporate entity, it's necessary to obey the basic game rule, which is to be in line with the law."

Both Liu Dianlin and Zhang Lei head companies that investigate manufacturers of counterfeit products. There are currently several hundred such companies operating nationwide.

### Booming industry

Zhang Lei sees the professional waging of war against fake products as a profitable industry.

"Individual anti-counterfeiting activity is just a phase. Corporate efforts to tackle counterfeiting is a better way of helping local enforcement bodies crack down on fakes," Zhang told *Beijing Today* in a telephone interview.

Zhang remains optimistic about the booming industry, pointing out that in this transitional period of China's market economy, counterfeiting and intellectual property infringement are major areas of concern.

Zhang set up his Lei Pai Business Consulting Company in 2000. Liu's Smiling Wolf Consulting Company followed in 2001. The primary business of both firms is to investigate and trace fake producers upon the request of corporate clients, most of whom are domestic or foreign brand owners.

It is estimated that there are around 200 such companies operating around China, but there are no official statistics as to the exact number.

"Where there is demand, there is a market, which shows the necessity and rationality of our existence," says Liu.

Besides the domestic consulting companies that focus on counterfeit investigation, foreign consulting companies that have entered the China market are also beginning to eye the industry's huge market potential.

"Brand protection and counterfeit investigation covers a high percentage of our business here in China, reaching almost 93 percent," says Bill Thompson, senior managing director of Pinkerton China, one of the world's lead-

ing personal investigation service providers.

With over 250 domestic and foreign corporate clients in China, Pinkerton now views the country as one of the most active markets for its counterfeit investigation service. Thompson says he does not expect demand to fall within the next 10 years.

### Lack of legitimacy

Although the counterfeit investigation industry is burgeoning in China, lack of legal status remains one of the major problems facing most companies involved in the business.

"Lack of legitimacy has been our on-going concern, though we can still manage to survive due to the abundant market demand," Thompson says.

Liu Dianlin and Zhang Lei also appealed for the government to grant legal status to investigation companies that focus on counterfeiting.

The Ministry of Public Security banned the establishment of private investigation companies offering security or civil services in 1993. But companies offering such services are still able to register with local Industrial and Commercial Administrations as "business consulting companies."

"Most of these business consulting companies actually utilize loopholes in the current system. The reason for the restriction on private investigation companies is to prevent infringements on the privacy of citizens," comments He Jiahong, a professor at the Law School of Renmin University.

*Beijing Today* called the enterprise registration bureau of the State Industrial and Commercial Administration to ask how these counterfeit investigation companies register.

Zhang Ming, director of the general office of the registration bureau said that "business consulting" is one major category for such companies to register. As to what kind of specific businesses the company will focus on, the bureau does not require an exact distinction.

"Combating counterfeiting is beneficial to the public interest. As long as these companies use lawful investigation means that don't violate others' rights, it is not illegal to run counterfeit investigation companies," confirmed Zhang.

### Validity of evidence

Another problem faced by counterfeit investigators is confusion over the validity of methods of collecting evidence during investigations.

"We usually covertly trace the



A blinding sandstorm is wreaking havoc with the plans of US-British coalition forces.

## Baghdad Assault Delayed

Heavy sandstorms in Iraq starting Tuesday, combined with fierce counterattacks by Iraqi troops, have slowed US-British forces, delaying their assault on Baghdad.

The US military announced Thursday that the first batch of 12,000 troops of the US Army's 4th Infantry Division are to leave their headquarters in Fort Hood, Texas, to join the war against Iraq.

The deployment means reinforcements for US ground forces in central Iraq, and allows time for the coalition airpower to weaken Iraq's Republican Guard around Baghdad before launching what it says will be a multi-pronged attack on the capital.

Despite the blinding sandstorm, the US-British planes continued bombing Baghdad. Eight huge explosions were heard in several parts of the city early Thursday as the Iraqi capital came under a new round of air strikes.

The raids followed a bloody attack early Wednesday, which killed 14 Iraqi civilians and wounded 30 when cruise missiles struck a residential area.

In Washington, the military denied it

had targeted a residential area, while a statement from the US Central Command acknowledged that it was possible civilians had been killed in the air strikes.

Meanwhile Iraq has accused the US and British forces of using cluster bombs, claiming that the anti-personal bombs had destroyed 200 homes and killed 500 civilians in the southern city of Nasiriyah.

The official Iraqi news agency reported that US and British troops are violating the Geneva Convention by rounding up civilians in southern Iraq and claiming them to be prisoners of war.

Earlier Wednesday, Iraqi Information Minister Mohammed Saeed al-Sahaf denied at a press briefing that Umm Qasr, the country's sole deep-water port, had fallen to British and US troops, saying the coalition forces had taken control of only one wharf of the port.

The coalition forces, however, claim that Umm Qasr is under their full control.

In Baghdad, the Iraqi military confirmed Wednesday that its Republican Guard forces had engaged US-British troops for

the first time since the war began, inflicting heavy losses in an attack in the mid-Euphrates region.

Al Jazeera TV reported later Wednesday, citing a US officer, that US troops had killed 1,000 Iraqis over the past 72 hours in the Najaf region in central Iraq. The US 3rd Infantry Division fought a fierce battle with Iraqi forces on Wednesday for control of a bridge over the Euphrates River close to the city of Najaf. (Xinhua)



The nightmare of war is becoming a daily reality for thousands of Iraqi children.

Xinhua Photos

source of the fake product and then lodge a complaint with local enforcement organizations," says Zhang Lei. "The methods we use are not illegal at least, but that is not to say they are totally lawful."

But sometimes, the covert methods used to gain evidence lead the enforcement bodies to question the validity of the evidence, and even reject it out of hand, says Zhang.

Pinkerton China's Bill Thompson told *Beijing Today* that his company has three common methods of investigation; sending company investigators, employing a local informant and co-

operating with law enforcement bodies. "Safety is our number one consideration," he stressed.

In the view of Professor He Jiahong, even if the cause of anti-counterfeit is justified, the way evidence is collected for the investigation also needs to be legal, to avoid infringing upon the subject of the investigation's legitimate interests. "Counterfeiters are first citizens whose basic rights should be protected. The key problem is how to strike a balance between safeguarding public rights through exposing fakes and avoiding infringing the legal rights of the subjects of investigation."

bought counterfeit products with the sole aim of winning compensation could be properly defined as "consumers." From 1998, several "anti-counterfeit" cases were lost when the defendants successfully argued that they could not.

In the wake of these setbacks, many individual investigators started setting up "business consulting companies" that investigate counterfeiting claims for corporate clients.

### Prospects for the industry

Wang Hai, China's first professional counterfeit investigator and also the founder of Da-Hai Commercial Consultancy, the first counterfeit investigation company in China, told *Beijing Today* that his company had established a network of professional lawyers and over 200 investigators nationwide.

"With the help of lawyers, we can fully guarantee the validity of the evidence we submit," he said. "I don't worry about the survival of counterfeit investigation companies, it is the loopholes in China's anti-counterfeiting measures that are my biggest concern."

The lack of specific responsibilities on the part of enforcement bodies is an example, according to Wang. "Some law enforcement departments are motivated by profits when cracking down on manufacturers of fake products. This is dangerous. The supervision of officials involved needs to be strengthened. Also, brand owners or investigation companies who lodge complaints should have the right to know the outcome of official raids on manufacturers of counterfeit products."

Wang also called for the active involvement of public security departments to help eradicate such crimes.

"Only when China's anti-counterfeit measures are strengthened can corporate counterfeit investigation be more effective, because after all, these companies are supplementary to the official forces," Wang said.

Even so, most other counterfeit investigation companies contacted by *Beijing Today* still hope that the country can strengthen supervision of the industry to help stimulate its healthy development.

Meanwhile, Ye Guang, who established a counterfeit investigation company in Chongqing in 1999, told *Beijing Today*, "Besides governmental supervision, the counterfeit investigation industry itself needs self-regulation and improvement in terms of qualification for future intense competition."

"The counterfeit investigation industry is only embryonic, and we expect a hot period to begin in the next 10 years," summed up Bill Thompson of Pinkerton China.

EDITOR: LIU FENG DESIGNER: LI SHI



# Banking Boss Faces Tough Tasks

By Ema Ma

Two weeks ago, the National People's Congress gave the go-ahead for the establishment of the Banking Regulatory Commission, but since then few details about when and how the organization will be set up have been disclosed. Some light was shed on the issue last Friday, with the appointment of Liu Mingkang as commission chairman.

Liu, currently the president of the Bank of China (BOC), was born in Shanghai in 1946, and holds a Master's degree in Business Administration from the City University of London, England. From 1979 to 1984, he worked in BOC's Jiangsu branch, after which he was assigned to the London branch for almost three years.

On his return to China, Liu served as the general manager of a trust company controlled by the BOC for one year and then was transferred to Fujian province in 1988. There Liu worked as director of BOC's Fujian branch for more than four years, before he was named deputy governor of the provincial government.

Only one year later, in 1994, he headed to Beijing for a position as the vice president of the newly-established China Development Bank, a government-owned bank that focuses on policy orientation. He stayed there until 1999.

Following short stints as the deputy director of the People's Bank of China, the central bank, deputy director of the Monetary Policy Commission, and chairman of Everbright Bank and Ever-

bright Group, Liu returned to the BOC in 2000 to be its president.

Under Liu's three-year tenure, BOC Hong Kong successfully listed on the Hong Kong stock exchange in 2002, despite the bank's being swamped in scandal surrounding its New York branch being penalized by US authorities for operating outside American law, legal transgressions on the part of the ex-president and the illegal transfer of several billions of yuan by a domestic branch.

Liu has earned a reputation for strictness due to his "carpet bombing" tactics within the bank, according to which he evaluated the performance of branch heads based on profits and bad debts. Results of such checks have been announced on BOC's internal website, and heads that did not show improvement laid off. Six provincial branch leaders have lost their jobs through these tactics, measures dubbed "revolutionary" among the four state-owned banks by national media.

According to the central government's plan for the reorganization of the structure of the State Council, the spin-off of the independent Banking Regulatory Commission from the People's Bank of China is aimed at allowing the central bank to concentrate on the stipulation and execution of monetary policy. The new commission will supervise commercial banks, non-performing assets management companies, trust companies and other savings institutions.

One of Liu's major tasks will be dealing with the huge amount of non-performing loans bogging down the four state-owned banks. Around 25 percent of all the loans they have issued are non-performing, which is widely considered the most serious danger facing this country's financial system. The government has called for non-performing loans to drop by two to three percent annually until 2005, at which point they should be under 15 percent.

Xiao Gang, former deputy chairman of the People's Bank, was named the new president of the BOC last Friday.

# Commerce Chief Targets Disorder

By Ema Ma

Lü Fuyuan, the new Minister of Commerce, made his first public appearance after taking office and gave a speech at last Sunday's China Development Forum held in Beijing.

The newly-formed Ministry of Commerce began operation Tuesday. It replaces the former Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation and the State Economic and Trade Commission, which were responsible for external and internal trade.

Based on figures from the first two months of this year, Lü predicted that in the next three years, China's imports will have a total value of nearly \$1 trillion, equal to the last five years' results combined.

Responding to a reporter's question about the nuisance regional protectionism posed for domestic and foreign companies, the minister said, "This is a really serious problem." He continued that the new ministry is drafting laws to fight monopolies and local protectionist policies.

According to Lü, "within one month, measures will be taken to strike against the protectionism and counterfeiting rampant in some areas. These will include enhancing relevant legislation and law enforcement, creating a nationwide corporate credibility system and developing a dedicated, well-equipped enforcement force to regulate market order."

Lü also warned that many local enterprises



A new sign hangs outside the Ministry of Commerce  
Xinhua Photo

will face harsh competition and a difficult road ahead in just a few years if they fail to abandon the narrow mindset of regional protectionism.

## A brief introduction to Minister Lü:

Lü was born in 1945 in Heilongjiang Province, northeast of China.

After graduating from Jilin University in 1970 with a major in physics, Lü worked in a small home maintenance office in Jilin Province.

From 1972 to 1981, Lü worked as a technician in Jilin's Changchun First Automobile Plant (now known as the FAW Group).

After two years abroad studying in the Engineering School of Montreal University in Canada, Lü returned to FAW and from a starting post as engineer, moved up to department chief and then chief financial officer in 1990.

Lü assumed the position of deputy director of the China National Automotive Industry Corporation from 1990 to 1993, after which he was transferred to the Ministry of Machinery Industry, where he oversaw the domestic auto industry.

From 1998 to 2002, Lü served as the deputy minister of education.

In April 2003, Lü was transferred to the post of deputy minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation.

## Tech Firms Rush for Expo Places

By Ema Ma

Enthusiasm about the sixth session of the China Beijing International Sci-Tech Industries Expo has already surpassed the expectations of the event's organizing committee. The committee receives several calls every day from companies requesting the area of the event be expanded because they cannot rent exhibition space.

The expo will be held in Beijing

from May 23 to 27. Exhibition space for the technology exchange and Digital Olympics areas has already been fully booked.

Participants in the expo will include WTO Director-General Supachai Panitchpakdi and the CEOs of dozens of Fortune Global 500 companies such as ABB Group, Bank of Tokyo Mitsubishi, Siemens, Carrefour, Deutsche Bank and EDF.

## Market Flexes Flower Power with Member System

By Shan Jinliang

Since last Friday, mornings have become a little less rosy for unlicensed flower vendors around the city. On that day, the Beijing Laitai Flower and Plant Market in Chaoyang District made its flower buyers club official, meaning non-members can no longer make purchases at its morning market.

Laitai is the largest fresh flower market in Beijing and holds a whopping 90 percent share of the local market. The company runs the morning market for small wholesalers and flower shops, and operates many shops of its own for ordinary consumers.

However, small flower dealers on the streets around town have taken a significant bite into the revenues of the 40 flower shops Laitai operates in this city. A 2002 survey conducted by the company of local flower retailers showed most were upset about the proliferation of illegal street flower vendors, according to Li Bingcheng, general manager of the company.

On February 10, the market began trials of its flower retailer club, granting membership to small wholesalers and flower shops for charges of 50 yuan to 150 yuan. Laitai morning market manager Jiang Hong told *Beijing Today* on Wednesday, "Around 2,400 people from 1,200 flowers shops and other entities have become members,

which indicates the trials have been generally successful."

Response among flower wholesalers and shop owners has been mixed. Some have called the membership system an effective means of standardizing the market, while others see it only as a way of squeezing fees from retailers. A few owners of Laitai wholesale stalls in the morning market told *Beijing Today* that their revenues fell slightly in the past week.

Accusations have also been made that this policy will encourage monopolistic behavior by member flower stores and wholesalers, leading to phenomena like the massive price hikes implemented on Valentine's Day this year, when the price of one rose shot from 3 to 5 yuan to around 200 yuan per stem.

Laitai's club has won support from the municipal and state government, and coincides with the Beijing Municipal Commercial Commission's plans to standardize the market by separating the flower wholesale and retail sections.

At the same time, Beijing Yuquanying in Fengtai District, the city's largest potted flower wholesale market, is still open to everyone, according to marketing manager Zhang Fudong, who said the company has no plan to start a membership club.

## L'Oreal-UNESCO Award Goes to Chinese Woman Scientist

By Xiao Rong

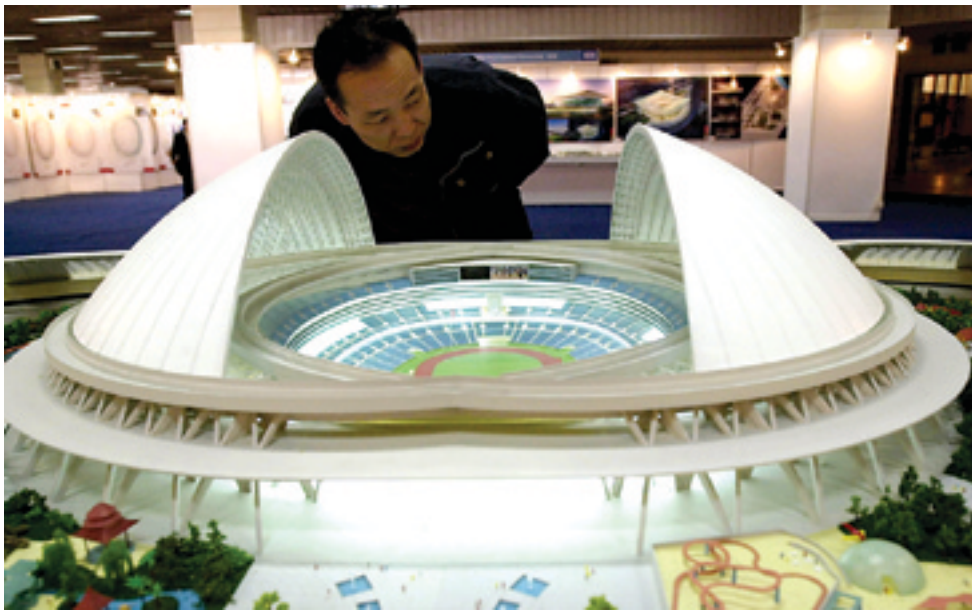
On Wednesday, Dr. Li Fanghua, a professor at the Chinese Academy of Sciences, won the L'Oreal-UNESCO Award for Women in Science for 2003. She is the first Chinese woman ever given this honor.

The 71-year-old electron microscopy expert said, "I really enjoyed my research, from which I gained much more than I have lost."

The awards program, which started in 1999 and is run by a partnership between L'Oreal and UNESCO, is aimed at encouraging women to pursue the sciences.



Photo by Louge



Xinhua Photo

## Olympic Stadium Designs on Show

Thirteen designs for the National Stadium, the main venue for the 2008 Beijing Olympics, are on show until March 31 at the Beijing International Convention Center. The public is invited to vote for their favorite designs.

The Beijing Urban Planning Commission (BUPC) said public opinions and suggestions will be taken into consideration when decision on the final design is made.

In a competition held on Tuesday, three designs were singled out as the best by a group of architects and experts. The winning designs came from a consortium of the

Swiss company Herzog & De Meuron and the China Architecture Design Institute, the Beijing Architecture Design Institute, and a consortium of Japan's AXS Company and the Tsinghua University Architecture Design Institute.

The 80,000-seat National Stadium, located in the south of the Olympic Green, will host the opening and closing ceremonies as well as track-and-field events during the 2008 Olympics. According to releases from BUPC, construction of the facility is set to start on December 24.

(Xinhua)

## League Cries Foul over Football Gambling

By Hou Mingxin

The Chinese Football Association (CFA) is up in arms because the Macao Lottery Co. has hosted betting on Series A games in the Chinese National Football League for three consecutive weeks.

Macao Lottery started to organize gambling on the matches on March 15, when the league's new season began. It was the first time for an overseas gambling company to target the CFA.

Immediately upon learning the news, the league responded with a strong objection on the grounds that the CFA is the owner of the league, meaning Macao Lottery should have notified the association before beginning to take bets.

Lang Xiaonong, director of the CFA's League Department, said last Monday, "Macao Lottery's action is inappropriate. Not following the rules like this will only lead to a big mess."

So far, the company has shown no sign of heeding the CFA's objections, as the number of matches open for gambling through the company increased from two in the first round of the season to four in the third. There are a total of seven matches in each of the 26 rounds per season.

Company representatives have responded to the CFA's statements by saying there is no legal requirement that they give notification about

organizing gambling.

"We host gambling on soccer leagues in several countries, such as Italy's Series A and the English Premiership, but we have never contacted the related football associations," said a company manager who requested anonymity.

He added, "Its general company practice not to notify related soccer associations, because if we do, we are likely to be suspected of trying to control matches."

The CFA has decided to pursue legal action against the Macao Lottery, according a report run in the Changsha-based newspaper *Titan Sports* on Wednesday. That article quoted Yang Yimin, CFA vice president, as saying, "we are trying to solve the problem using legal measures, and our attorney is preparing needed materials."

This dispute is especially charged because the Chinese government is currently engaged in a battle against corruption in domestic football, and the CFA is worried gambling could influence the results of league matches.

Past Chinese Football League seasons were marred by thrown matches and corrupt referees, popularly referred to as "black whistles."

On January 29, soccer ref Gong Jianping received a 10-year jail sentence after being convicted of taking 370,000 yuan in bribes during the 2000-2001 season.

## Regulation on Sino-foreign Schools Released

By Ema Ma

Rules made by the State Council regarding foreign investment and cooperation in the education field were announced last Sunday, and will take effect on September 1. The release is not exactly timely, however, since a total of 712 Sino-foreign joint run schools had already been established nationwide as of the end of February.

The rules are meant to encourage cooperation between foreign and domestic institutions of higher and continuing education. Foreign involvement is barred from compulsory education or special institutions related with military service, police or politics.

According to the rule, the heads of Sino-foreign education institutions must be Chinese citizens with experience in the education field. Foreign teachers and administrators are required to hold bachelor's degrees or higher degrees and relevant professional licenses and have education experience.

The introduction of advanced courses and teaching materials from abroad is also encouraged, though the fees for such services and materials must stay within the bounds of government regulations and be made known to the general public. Schools are required to put tuition income mainly towards educational activities and the improvement of facilities.

Graduates of Sino-foreign schools will receive degrees or qualifications equivalent to the certificates normally issued by local educational institutions.

## China to OK Foreign Investment in Entertainment Venues

Foreign individuals and companies will be allowed to invest in domestic entertainment performance venues, *China Youth Daily* reported Wednesday. Sources from the Ministry of Culture revealed that the ministry is conducting feasibility studies on the matter.

Foreign capital may be permitted to go towards the construction or renovation of performance sites, which could include theaters or cinemas, said a ministry official who requested anonymity.

The official added this would be another major change in China's entertainment industry, following the abandonment of previous policy that only allowed state capital to flow into the performance market in 2002. This possible change is intended to offset the shortage of money and human resources in the domestic performance market.

The *China Youth Daily* story reported the ministry and cultural administrations at all levels will also further loosen controls over the licensing of domestic entertainment organizations and the approval of performances.

An official with the ministry was quoted as saying that the past control was somewhat a product of the planned economy and could not keep up with the development of the performance market.

(Xinhua)





Stephen Roach

# World Recession Could Pose Threat

By Ivy Zhang

The war in Iraq poses a risk for China, with the possibility that the world could head back into recession, according to Morgan Stanley's chief global economist, Stephen Roach.

Roach, who was speaking at a press conference in Beijing Tuesday on the launch of Morgan Stanley's Chinese language website, said such an outcome would be bad news for

China, as it depends heavily on exports to maintain its economic growth. In 2002, China saw 8 percent growth, 74 percent of which came from exports.

Commenting on the value of the yuan in the post-war era, Roach said he expected the dollar would keep going down for the next couple of years, which could help resolve the budget deficit.

Meanwhile, Roach pointed out, foreign direct investment in China is accelerating. In the first two months of 2003, US \$11 billion of foreign direct investment flowed into China.

Last year, about \$52 billion of foreign direct investment was actually spent or utilized, making China the largest recipient of foreign direct investment in the world.



The 2003 China International Garments Fair was held in Beijing yesterday, and it was part of the ongoing week-long 2003 Beijing International Fashion Week.

Photos by Photocom

## IC Design School Opens in Beijing

By Sun Ming

The first Sino-America school to train integrated circuit (IC) design engineers will open in Beijing next month.

The Zhongguancun-Cadence Institute of Software Technology (ZCIST), jointly established by American Cadence, one of the world's largest supplier of electronic design technologies and services, and Zhongguancun Software Education Investment will accept 500 students in the coming term.

"We are unique in Beijing, China, even in the world in terms of the scale of our advanced facilities and teachers," Charles Wang, principal of ZCIST, told *Beijing Today* on Monday.

Wang said that ZCIST boasts over 300 workstations and servers and

over 1,800 sets of software. He added that all the teachers are experts or professors from renowned American enterprises or universities.

"As far as I know, ZCIST is at least unique in Beijing," Yang Ronglan, of the Zhongguancun Administrative Committee, told *Beijing Today*.

There is great demand for engineers with skills in electronic systems and IC design in China. Now there are about 4,000 IC design engineers in the country, but the number is expected to reach 300,000 by 2008. Beijing will establish around 20 advanced product lines for silicon chips and 200 IC design companies by 2010, according to the Beijing Semiconductor Association.

*Beijing Business Today* reports that latest research shows the gross productive value of the industry of

IC and microelectronics in Beijing will surpass 200 billion yuan by 2008.

A newly qualified IC design engineer with no practical experience can earn 80,000 yuan per year in Beijing, compared with the average salary in Beijing of 30,000 yuan.

"Currently only 300 or so graduates obtain a master's degree in IC design and micro-electronics every year in China and they usually lack practical experience," said Dong Xiubin, director of Beijing Semiconductor Association, "IC design is quite a new subject in China."

Dong added that there are at present no universities in China with the ability to set IC fabrication labs, which require high technology and large amounts of money. "One lab for 30 students needs US \$150,000 just

for the hardware."

ZCIST principal Charles Wang said, "At ZCIST, however, 250 students can experiment at the same time."

"Students will undoubtedly benefit from gaining hands-on experience from what they learn at ZCIST and apply their knowledge in the workplace when they graduate," said Wang, "And they will get a Cadence License, which is popular in the IC circle overseas."

Cadence and Sun Microsystems in China will establish a scholarship program, called the Sun-Cadence Scholarship, worth a total of US \$60,000 over three years and will be awarded to full-time students enrolled to ZCIST, which will offer seven courses at a cost of 30,000 yuan each.

## Legend Denies Report on JV Pause with AOL

By Shan Jinliang

China's leading computer maker Legend Group yesterday denied a report by Reuters on Wednesday, which said Legend's joint venture with AOL Time Warner, AOL Legend, will be put on hold.

According to the report, AOL and Legend are considering the addition of other partners, possibly one or both of China's two big fixed-line telephone companies to the venture, said Mary Ma, Legend's chief financial officer, they are talking about business (with China Telecom and Netcom), but they had not talked about a partnership yet. Ma continued a trial of the Internet service, a major business of AOL Legend, whose Chinese name translates as "Flying Dragon," began in August and ended one or two months ago, the Reuters report said.

AOL Legend senior PR manager Qu Lezhang told *Beijing Today* that Ma did receive the interview from Reuters in a Hong Kong meeting a few days ago, but Ma did not tell anything about the joint venture suspending. Qu said, "Our Internet service is still in the trial period, and the official operation is yet to come."

AOL Legend was established with an investment of US \$200 million in June 2001, and it was controlled by Legend with 51 percent share, but the joint venture Internet service provider has never started commercial service and had made no profits to date. In the official website (www.aollegend.com.cn), it claims to become a leading domestic online service provider in terms of sign-up membership as AOL Warner runs in the US.

Now AOL Legend mainly serves the FM365.com.cn, a subsidiary of Legend, but it has not found a suitable profit-making model, according to a report by *the 21st Century Economic Herald* last month. A Morgan Stanley analyst said last month if Legend gives up the joint venture, it will lose the chances of making great profits in the Internet and media, the report added.

## Life Insurance JV Approved

By Tony Shaw

Beijing residents will be able to buy insurance from the city's first joint venture life insurance company from the first quarter next year, following the awarding of a license to Swedish-based Skandia Insurance last Saturday.

"It is the first international joint-venture life insurance license granted in Beijing, one of the largest markets for this type of product in China," says Lars-Eric Petersson, Skandia president and CEO.

It will also be the first business entity in China established by northern Europe's top savings insurance company. With a registered capital of 200 million yuan, the Chinese partner in the yet to be named joint venture is Beijing State-owned Asset Management Corporation.

"We will introduce the long-term savings solution to Beijing investors," said Hao Zhirong, a senior marketing official of Skandia China Representative Office in Shanghai, "As Skandia does in 25 countries, it will combine functions of investment, savings and insurance, which will be a first in Beijing."

Hao told *Beijing Today* Wednesday that the joint venture will sell its products through banks and securities companies, making it the first insurance company to operate this way in China. She added banks and securities companies will be agents of a number of insurance products, providing them with the opportunity to tailor to the needs of consumers, rather than following the old model by which agents promoted only one product.

When asked why Skandia chose Beijing, rather than Shanghai, as its first business branch, Hao said it was because there were few competitors here.

## Nestlé Slashes Ice Cream Prices

By Tony Shaw

Food manufacturing giant Nestlé announced Tuesday it will sell its 12 varieties of ice creams at 1.5 yuan to 2.5 yuan each in China this summer, a price cut of 0.5 to 2.5 yuan.

Ice creams are one of the youngest but fastest growing of Nestlé's global product family. The company established its ice cream unit in China in 1992, and since then, the business has grown rapidly.

With prices as low as 1 yuan, Chinese ice cream makers have seized most of the domestic market share in recent years. Yili Group overtook Nestlé and Wall's to become China's top ice cream manufacturer in China's most regions.

From 1998 Nestlé began cutting the price of its ice cream products in a bid to claw back market share. It also tried to broaden its appeal, with products specifically targeting kids, teenagers and young adults.

Following Yili's announced late last year on a cooperation with Disney to promote *Lilo and Stitch* cartoon images for its ice cream products, Nestlé said Tuesday it will join with Warner Brothers to introduce *the Matrix 2*, in the ice cream sales peak season from May to July.

In Tuesday's press release, Nestlé said it will increase its investment in China, possibly a response to Unilever's announced last Friday that it was raising its investment in Wall's by 150 million yuan. It also said the company planned to expand its market by acquiring some Starbucks ice cream brands. But to date, no agreement on this has been finalized, according to Ken Donaldson, director of Nestlé China Ice Cream Business Unit.

## Sina Jostles for Online Games Supremacy

By Shan Jinliang

China's largest news portal website, Sina denied a rumor Wednesday that its South Korean partner, NC Soft, had withdrawn capital from the joint venture Sina Happy Valley.

From early this month, Sina Happy Valley began promoting its eleventh version of the online game Lineage, following the establishment of the joint venture this January.

Sina president and Sina Happy Valley CEO Wang Yan said the move was intended to attract the 60 million players of Legend to its game Lineage, at a time when Legend is involved in a dispute between Shanda, the Chinese operator and the South Korean developer company, Actoz Soft. Actoz Soft said it will terminate the contract with Shanda from late May.

Sina Happy Valley has seen a steady growth of online gamers, but industry experts warn the joint venture will have to endure some pain and take a few risks if it is to beat the big games operators in China.

### Reality Vs. dream

Seeing the online game industry with an annual growth of over 100

percent, Sina established its joint venture Sina Happy Valley with the South Korean NC Soft on January 8. With the world's most popular online game, Lineage, NC Soft had secretly required the joint venture to profit within a certain period, otherwise it would cancel the cooperation.

In the Chinese market of 150 million players, Sina will have to host 30 million players, to fulfill its promise of becoming the country's top online game operator, but latest figures show Lineage's average number of players in China is only 11,000.

### Opportunity knocks

Shortly after Shanda and its South Korean partner cancelled their contract, Sina Happy Valley announced on May 8 that it would allow the first 2,000 "town leaders" of Legend, who usually have 300 to 400 subordinates, credit for their equipment coins.

The first week after the announcement, Sina's Lineage hosted more than 300 players who had migrated from Legend. Wu said the next step is to set up online game servers in Southwest China, which boasts the largest num-



Wang Yan, Sina Happy Valley CEO at the press release for Lineage this January.

ber of game players in China.

### Problems for newcomer

A *21st Century Economic Herald* report last week said Lineage's largest problem in China will be the difficulty level. "The game was developed to cater to the demands of European, American, Japanese and South Korean markets, it is not easy to get success in China," the report added. Wu Feng, Sina Happy Valley deputy general manager Wu told *Beijing Today* since Legend was quite popular in Taiwan, he was confident it will boom in the Chinese mainland.

Some game players say Sina Happy

Valley is destroying the fundamental rule of online games by allowing the sale of suppositional currencies and weapons, and they argue it will substantially reduce the entertainment value, and put off new players.

Now the number of Lineage's online players is steady at around 30,000, Legend has 600,000 at most, MU, run by the9.com has around 300,000 online users, and a few others have around 100,000 players. At the same time, more foreign online game companies, including Microsoft and Sony, are also making preparations to enter the market.



# "Strike on Iraq" Blasts World Markets

March 26 (Reuters) - Oil prices jumped and stocks and the dollar dipped Wednesday as investors resigned themselves to the prospect of a prolonged war in Iraq.

Safe-haven gold and bonds inched up, but trading volumes in most markets were low.

Oil prices climbed two percent on concern Iraqi crude exports would be off the market for some time.

Airline and hotel industries are also seeing a slide in business volumes.



Xinhua Photo

## Stocks

On Wednesday, the blue-chip Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 0.61 percent to 8,229.88. The tech-laced Nasdaq Composite slipped 0.26 percent to 1,387.45.

Tokyo was the best performing major stock market in Asia, with the Nikkei average ending morning trade down just five points at 8,346.53. Trading was

depressed by the absence of Japanese banks and pension funds ahead of the financial year-end, leaving the market struggling less than four percent above 20-year lows struck this month.

"We are a headline-driven market," said Arthur Hogan, chief market analyst at Jefferies & Co. Investors are scouring headlines about Iraq on how and when the US-led war will end. Stocks sank more than 3 percent on Monday, snapping an eight-day streak of gains.

## Oil

US light crude jumped as much as 61 cents to \$29.24 a barrel on worries a protracted



Burning oil wells in Iraq light the worries in the world oil markets. Reuters Photo

war would delay resumption of Iraqi oil exports.

The market was also buoyed by the closure of part of Nigeria's oil production because of clashes between an ethnic group and the military. Still, crude is well below 12-year highs near \$40 a barrel hit in the run-up to the war.

Fimat broker Mike Fitzpatrick said the market had been swung around by rumors and breaking news. "The market is very sensitive," he said.

## Airline Traffic

March 26 (Dow Jones News-wires) - Passenger traffic on US airlines is down 10% from last year and bookings for future

trips are plunging, the Wall Street Journal reported.

Industry-wide traffic figures available also show a sharp decline beginning from when President Bush issued his 48-hour ultimatum to Saddam Hussein last week. Compared with a year earlier, traffic was down 7.7% on March 17, followed by an 11.4% drop on March 18 and a 15% drop on March 19, the day the ultimatum expired and bombing began. With war under way, the data showed traffic falling by 9% to 11.7% daily.

## Hotel Industry

New York, March 25 (AP) - The travel industry's grim outlook has cast a shadow over prospects for the hotel business.

Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide Inc., owner of the Sheraton and Westin brands, withdrew its first quarter and full year earnings forecasts. The news sent its stock price tumbling.

White Plains, the New York-based company, said it was surprised by the "significant deterioration in business" as a result of worsening geopolitical conditions.

Shares in hotel management groups are now seeing a rapid

decline in the US stock market, compared to the sharp rise on hopes that the war in Iraq would end relatively quickly last week.



AFP Photo

## Safe Havens

Earlier this week, prices of safe havens like bonds and gold had risen as investors sought shelter ahead of Iraq fighting that the Pentagon said would be the toughest yet.

The benchmark US government 10-year note fell 6/32 to yield 3.99 percent versus 3.97 percent late on Monday. Japanese government bonds rose, pushing the 20-year yield to a record low for a second day, at 1.13 percent.

Gold climbed to \$331.1 an ounce from \$330.6 at the US close.

The dollar fell a third of a percent to 119.7 yen. The euro rose to \$1.0713 from \$1.0692.



AP Photo

## UN Seeks Record \$2 Billion Emergency Aid for Iraq

United Nations, March 27 (Reuters) - The United Nations is preparing its largest-ever appeal for emergency humanitarian aid, seeking more than \$2 billion from governments around the world for war-torn Iraq, UN officials said on Wednesday.

UN officials said they expect the aid appeal to total at least \$2.1 billion, including a record \$1.2 billion to be designated for emergency food purchases by the Rome-based World Food Program.

But UN diplomats cautioned there would be little enthusiasm among donor nations, many of whom believe the United States and Britain bear primary responsibility for humanitarian aid after launching their invasion without Security Council approval.

(Irwin Arieff)

## Iraq War Curtails Asia's Growth

Singapore (AFP) - A long war in Iraq would hurt Asia's economic prospects this year, particularly for the export-oriented countries that depend on the United States to drive growth, economists said.

Asian governments have in recent years taken measures to boost domestic demand in a bid to curb their countries' reliance on exports to the United States, but progress has been limited.

Experts believe if the war is prolonged, oil prices will rise. This will be particularly painful for smaller economies like Singapore and Taiwan.

Tourism is another vulnerable industry.

## Maritime Insurance Premiums Double

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, March 26 (AP) - Premiums for maritime war insurance have increased due to the war in Iraq, Saudi maritime officials said earlier this week.

Premiums for shipments to ports such as Dammam in eastern Saudi Arabia doubled, while shipments to the port of al-Shuwaikh in Kuwait went up the most - more than 300 percent.

International insurance companies will review their premium valuation once a week starting last Monday, and more increases are expected as the war continues.

## Russia Ranks Third in Grain Exports

Moscow, March 25 (Xinhua News Agency) - Russia claimed today it has become one of the world's three largest grain exporters.

Russia's Agriculture Minister claimed in Moscow that the country produced 86 million metric tons of grain last year and exported 14 million. The country is expecting to export another 15 million metric tons this year.

The minister emphasized Russia has the capability to increase its grain output to an annual 110 million metric tons.

## Dell Sells Printers, Rivaling HP

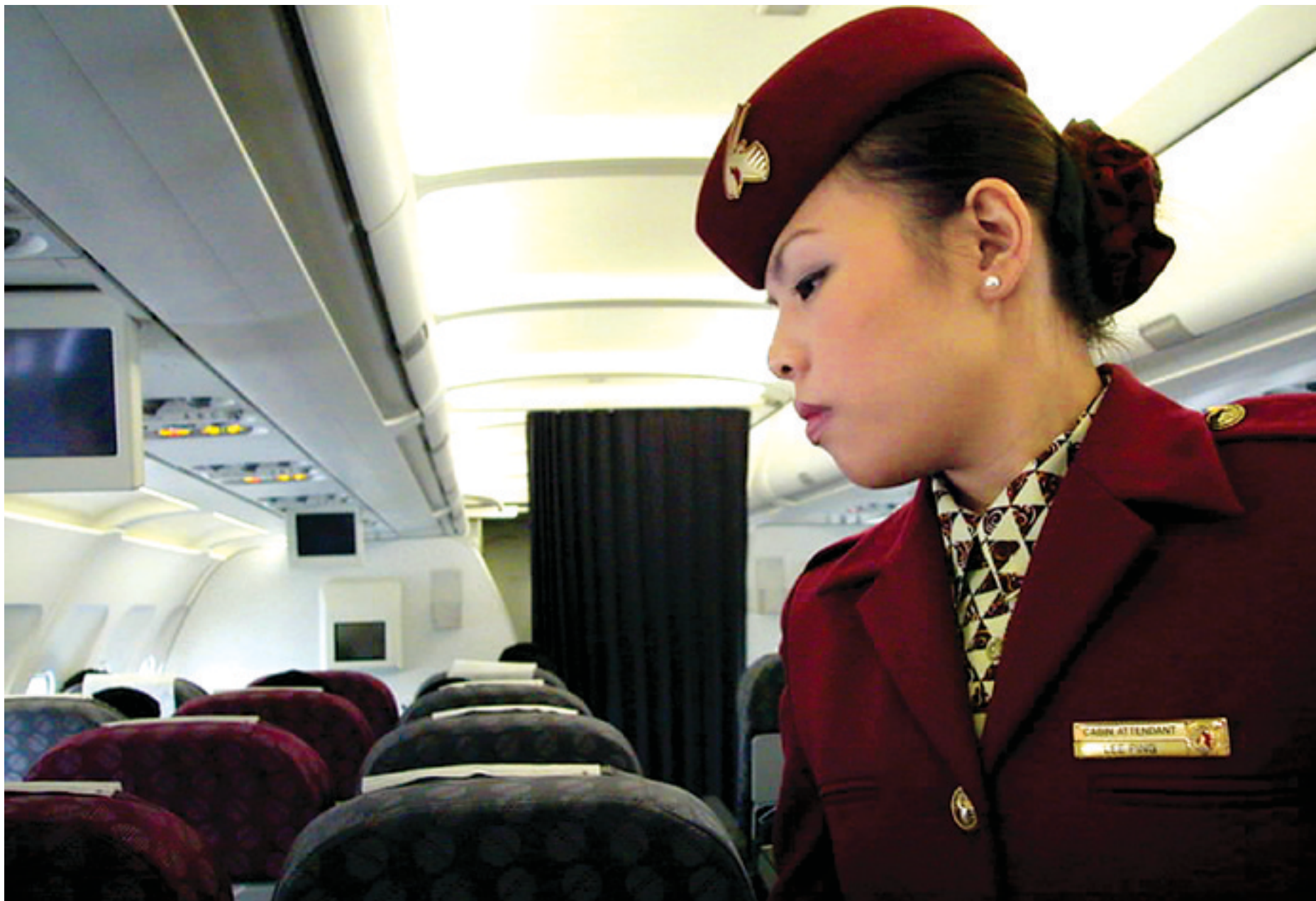
Austin, Texas, March 26 (AP) - Dell Computer Corp. began taking orders this week for its new line of printers and cartridges, marking a long-expected step into the inkjet and laser business.

At the low end is an all-in-one machine that includes a scanner, copier and fax software. The highest-end model is a high-speed Dell Workgroup Laser S2500n that can be networked.

The printers, ranging in price from \$139 to \$839, were made for Dell by Lexington, the Kentucky-based Lexmark International Inc.

Dell dismissed rumors that it is grabbing market share from Hewlett-Packard. "HP's prices are comparable or lower," said Dell's spokeswoman Diane Roncal.

(Connie Mabin)



Where'd the passengers go?

Airlines around the world have cancelled flights within and around the Persian

Gulf. Remaining flights, like this on between Qatar and Manama, capital Bahrain, are not providing popular.

Xinhua Photo

# Kim: No Danger of a New Financial Crisis

Seoul, March 14 (Reuters) - South Korea's finance minister Kim Jin-pyo said his country was not in danger of a re-run of the 1997-98 financial crisis.

Kim made his remarks at a news conference in Seoul last Friday. Kim said that the accounting scandal at SK Group should be regarded as an isolated case.

## Officials Complain About SK probe

Seoul, March 15 (koreaherald.co.kr) - Two top financial officials recently met former Prosecutor General Kim Kak-young to express their concern about the prosecution's investigation into the SK Group.

Kim Jin-pyo, deputy prime minister for economy and finance, and Lee Keun-young, chairman of the Financial Supervisory Com-



South Korea's finance minister Kim Jin-pyo Reuters Photo

mission, visited Kim at his office, conveying their concerns about the impact the investigation into the SK Group could have on the economy. They asked the prosecution to delay the announcement of the outcome of its probe into the conglomerate.

## South Korea to Stimulate Investment

Seoul, March 10 (Reuters)

- South Korea, conceding that strong steps were necessary to underpin Asia's fourth-largest economy, said on Monday it would focus on stimulating investment to help it ride out a buffeting from global risks.

In its first report to new President Roh Moo-hyun, the finance ministry said it aimed to boost corporate investment through relaxing restrictions, but said it would try to avoid boosting consumption because of unwelcome potential side effects. (Kim Myong-hwan)

## Analysts' Take:

Gao Haorong, senior journalist, Xinhua News Agency branch, Seoul, South Korea

Politically, North Korea's nuclear program is a growing headache, while the impact on

oil supply of the Iraq crisis and the downturn in US economic growth have cast shadows over the country's economic outlook.

The new president has started his reforms of the country's family conglomerate "chaebols", aiming at tackling corruption and irregularities which are believed to be hindering the sustainable growth of the country's economy as well as damaging social equality. But his program has already run into difficulties because enterprises are decreasing their investment.

The country's financial market has been destabilized recently by several factors: South Korea's external trade ran in deficit for the first two months of this year; public consumption is decreasing, and the SK scandal has caused shockwaves.

The government here has started taking steps to rebuild market confidence, such as the injection of two trillion won to purchase back government bonds and relaxing restrictions to encourage enterprises to invest.

Robert A. Mundell, professor of Economics, Columbia University, winner of the 1999 Nobel Prize in Economics

Concerning North Korea's nuclear program and president Rho Mun Hyun's efforts to tackle the chaebols on corruption and financial structures, this is a risky time for South Korea's market economy.

If the political crisis becomes more severe, there might be a second financial crisis in the country. Political disputes always have an impact on the economy.



# Students Dream of Saying 'Chicken or Fish'

By Lily Li

The west gate of Workers' Stadium was the site of a surprising scene last Sunday. At just 8 o'clock in the morning, over 1,000 well-

dressed university students were lined up, trying to get inside.

They were not there to get tickets to see their favorite pop idol - they had loftier ambitions.



Photo by Chen Shuyi

On that day, Air China was holding its first ever student air steward recruitment activity at the stadium.

"Air China has 2,000 stewards, but many are relatively old, so we decided to do large scale recruiting from the class of 2003 to inject some new blood into the company," said Liu Jianqiang, Communist Party secretary of the company's passenger cabin department.

However, of the over 1,000 candidates, only 65 young women and 15 young men will receive air steward positions.

Hu Huiping, manager of the airline's passenger cabin department, said there were three steps to the process: identification validation, stature and test, and face-to-face interviews.

About 700 candidates passed

the first two steps, but only 140 made it through the interview process. Those aspiring stewards sat for second round interviews on Wednesday and Thursday, and the winners of the cherished positions will be announced next week.

According to Liu, a common weakness among the interviewees was lack of foreign language ability.

Among the prospective stewards was a 22-year-old Australian overseas student, though the company has not released any information on how the young man fared.

Li Fujian, head of Air China's personnel department, said adding the recruitment of foreign stewards is common practice among international airlines.

## Armed Police Patrol Airport

By Sun Ming / Zhang Xiong / Zhao Xing

Since the start of the war in Iraq on Thursday last week, armed police and soldiers have appeared in the Beijing Capital International Airport.

At the request of airlines from the US, the UK and Israel, the airport posted police armed with handguns at the carriers' ticketing areas and the boarding gates to their flights.

A 20-meter buffer zone has also been set up between external security checkpoints and

airplane parking aprons. Airport employees and vehicles that want to enter the parking aprons will be searched by armed soldiers.

Staff from the airport's administration office explained that the three countries' airlines filed the request in order to prevent possible threats to the safety of their flights.

The airport has also added patrols to waiting rooms, especially those used by the three countries' airlines, although no changes have been made to passenger safety check procedures.

## United Airlines Offers Free Ticket Extensions

By Lily Li

Coinciding with the launch of the war in Iraq, US-based United Airlines released a new policy at 10:40 am Beijing time last Thursday allowing certain passengers to make changes to their travel plans without having to pay any fees.

For tickets purchased before March 31 for travel before May 18, the airline will allow free extensions to any time before December 31, 2003.

Qiu Yan, manager of the marketing department at United's Beijing Office, said this is a global policy applicable in other parts of the world and on all routes. "The company drew up the policy before the start of war was announced, after which it went into effect," she added.

Customers who decide to change or put off travel can buy new tickets of up to equal value as their original fares without paying transfer fees.

If the prices of the new tickets are lower than those of the originals, the airline will issue travel coupons covering the difference. In cases when the new tickets are more expensive, customers will have to make up any discrepancies.

Passengers that intend to change their tickets need to inform United and related travel agencies before April 19 or the departure date on the ticket if previous to that day.

United ticket holders will only get one chance each to change tickets without paying fees.

## Credit Consumers Get Car Rewards

By Ema Ma

Using credit cards really paid off for two lucky people last Saturday - they were given the keys to two Hyundai cars, which they can use for five years.

The prizes were part of the first credit card consumption lottery launched by the local government this year to promote credit card use.

The first winner, Li Jingsheng, had charged over 1,000 yuan to his card at one time earlier this year, while the other lucky consumer, Zhang Zheng, won for a mere 99 yuan purchase made at the Capital Times Square shopping center

in February.

According to the government's plan for credit card development in Beijing, by 2004, 20 percent of all purchases will be made using plastic, up five percent from 2001. By 2008, that figure should reach 25 percent, with 90 percent of city businesses able to accept credit cards.

On Thursday, Wang Xiaodan, president of a sales company controlled by China Petroleum, said that over 100 gas stations in Beijing will begin accepting China Unionpay credit cards at the end of April, if current trials continue to go smoothly.

## Company Pays for Broken Promise

By Sun Ming / Gao Zhihai

The moral of this story is do not upset the China Literature and Art Foundation. The group has successfully sued a company that promised to hand over a donation of 600,000 yuan three years ago, but never made good on its word.

After a long-running court case, the two sides reached a compromise solution last week. In the end, the defendant, Beijing Changcheng Yulong Real Estate Company, agreed to hand over 200,000 yuan.

"This is the first time in Beijing that a defendant has been sued for breaking its promise," Zhou Ruisheng, the Beijing Second Intermediate Court judge who presided over the case, told *Beijing Today*.

In March 2000, the China Literature and Art Foundation launched an activity to raise money for poor minority children in western China. That July, the real estate firm promised to contribute 600,000 yuan to the activity.

Even though only an oral agreement was made, the two organizations held a formal donation ceremony in September 2000, an event covered by local media. The foundation issued a donation certificate to company, which later balked on its promise.

In September last year, the foundation filed suit against the company in the Beijing Chongwen District People's Court.

"Our donation was conditional," Wu Ming (pseudonym), vice-manager of the company, told the court during initial hearings. Wu added the foundation promised to help his company in a business deal, "But they didn't, so we refused to turn over the money."

However, he and other company representatives did not present any evidence that the foundation had made or broken such a promise. Following the national Contract Law enacted in 1999, any donation for public welfare must be fulfilled, regardless of whether agreements are made orally or in writing. Under previous policy, oral agreements were not legally binding.

The Chongwen Court judged in the foundation's favor in January this year, ordering the company to pay 600,000 yuan, after which the real estate company filed an appeal to the Second Intermediate Court.

Through court mediation, the two sides reached a compromise last week in which the foundation agreed to accept a compensation figure of just 200,000 yuan.

"Actually, the foundation was entitled to the full 600,000 yuan from the company, according to the new Contract Law," said judge Zhou.

The foundation has not issued any explanation for why it accepted the compromise amount.

## Parachute Fanatic All Wet

By Lily Li

Last Tuesday morning, amateur parachute maker Qin Ning leaped off a 55-meter-high platform over a river in Shidu, on the outskirts of Beijing, in a test run of his newest device.

When the chute failed to open, he plunged straight into the cold water, but quickly floated to the surface, unharmed.

This 33-year-old construction worker has spent his life savings inventing new kinds of parachutes over the past 10 years. Last November, he received a national patent for a "parachute for saving lives, mainly for use by people living in high buildings and working on high equipment."

As he prepared to take the leap, Qin had a big smile on his face and told the large crowd that gathered at the platform that he had conducted successful tests of the chute using sandbags.

The crowd was clearly on his side, as some people held signs that read "We wish a successful flight for Qin Ning" while photographers angled for the best shots. At 12:10 am, Qin made one last check of his chute, lowered his head, and began the countdown.

"5!4!3!2!1!," yelled the crowd, at which point Qin let go of the platform. Their applause changed to silence and then screams, however, as the daring inventor plunged feet-first into the river, the parachute trailing limply behind him.

Two rescue boats were scrambled to grab Qin, who quickly surfaced and floated for a minute in the river. "I'm OK," he told the crowd when he got out of the boats, sopping. Later, he speculated that the reason for the failed jump was the platform was not high enough to give him time to open the 10-meter-long parachute.

Yet Qin was not dismayed by this public failure. "I felt a strong pull from the parachute just before I fell into the water, so I think it helped some, even though it didn't open. I'm going to conduct some more tests to make sure the chute works. I'll never give up," he said.

Photos by Wang Wei



'Geron...'



After splash-down



No pain, no gain

## Two Murdered by Suspicious Lover

By Sun Ming / Xu Hu

At the beginning of this month, a 27-year-old man killed his 73-year-old lover, Wang Shengqi, because he suspected him of being unfaithful.

The young man then murdered Wang's daughter out of fear she would reveal his identity.

The two victims were found at Wang's home in Fuchengmenwai, Xicheng District, on March 3, bludgeoned to death. The older man's penis had been cut off, according to a release from the Xicheng police made on Monday.

From information provided by Wang's relatives and neighbors, the police learned the elderly man usually lived alone and had little contact with others, except for a young man who called himself "Guozi" when he knocked at the

door to the apartment.

Police later managed to determine that the young man was Guo Yuanbin, a car repairman in Beijing.

"Guo's boss told us that he had used different excuses to ask for leave several times from March 2 to 4, and he sounded weird on the phone, which aroused our suspicion," policeman Xu Hu told *Beijing Today*.

On the evening of March 5, Xicheng policemen rushed to Guo's home in Shouyang County, Shanxi Province, but he was not there. The police were told that Guo only stayed at his home for several hours and left the morning of March 4.

Guo finally revealed his location on March 5 when he called the pager of one of his coworkers in Beijing. The telephone number that appeared on the pager showed

Guo was in Taiyuan, the capital of Shanxi. The next day, he was arrested at his uncle's home in that city.

Once in the custody of the Xicheng police, Guo admitted to the crime. He said he met Wang in a garden in June 2001, shortly after which they became lovers.

"But then a test I got at the Xicheng Venereal Disease and AIDS Prevention Center in July last year showed I was HIV-positive," Guo told police. He was convinced that he had contracted the disease from Wang, proving the older man's infidelity.

Despite his doubts, Guo did not end the relationship until the murder.

On March 1, while on the phone with Wang, Guo heard another man's voice in the background. "I was furious. Wang gave me AIDS, so I knew he must have had other lovers. Then I set my mind on killing

him," he told the police.

Guo committed the crime the next evening after finishing dinner with Wang at the older man's apartment. After Wang was soundly asleep, Guo hit him on the head with a wrench, then severed his lover's penis and threw it in the toilet.

On the morning of March 3, Wang's daughter, Wang Yafen, called to speak to her father and Guo told her he was sick. Wang later came to the apartment, where Guo killed her with the same wrench.

Officer Xu told *Beijing Today* he suspects Guo has serious psychological problems.

"We sent him to take a HIV test again last week, but the results came up negative," Xu said. "He did get tested at the Xicheng Center, but never went back to get the results."



## The Giving Tree

By James Liu

Dr. Bernd Leissner, President of Volkswagen Group for Asian Pacific Region, and his wife May shovel soil around a pine sapling at the Badaling section of the Great Wall last Saturday as part of a tree-planting event.



By Lily Li

Everyone's into auctions these days. Yang Yuying, a famous singer, recently auctioned her Porsche. Houses owned by Liu Xiaoqing have been put under the gavel, as have illegal belongings of Yuanhua Group. Now, a private college in Xi'an has decided the best way to shove its students firmly into the market place is to sell them at an auction.

At a meeting held by Xi'an Ou Ya Private College on March 8, the college invited companies to bid for ten top students in terms of the annual salaries they would offer. The ten students went up to the stage to display their strengths, giving speeches about their studies, skills and honors. The companies asked them a few questions and then the auction began, with a starting price of 28,000 yuan in annual salary for each student.

"Do I hear 31,000? I have 33,000 — 33,000 once, 33,000 twice, OK, bargain". As the gavel struck, Shi Weihua from the Journalism Department was bought for the highest salary at the auction.

"This is better than what I had expected," Shi Weihua said happily. Shi said she had taken part in many interviews but the companies' qualification requirements were too high for her. "Such an auction offers me an opportunity to show my confidence and ability," she added.

At last, eight of the ten students were sold off, and they all felt satisfied. "Some people might think it's like selling products, but I'm grateful the college organized this auction and helped me find a job," said Peng Qiang, who went for 31,000 yuan.

Twenty eight companies attended the auction, including China Unicom, TCL Group, China Railway Communication Company, and Shangri-la Hotel.

Director Geng from the Employment Center of the college said the auction was a brave and important step. "This kind of public auction is a change from the usual interviewing method which has never been very good in terms of communication between companies and students. It can help us recommend good students to companies, as well as exhibiting our successful teaching methods," he said.

Zhao Lan, director of the Personnel Department in a Xi'an business company which bought five graduate students at the auction, said he was impressed that the students introduced themselves bravely on the stage. Zhao's only complaint was that the college should have done more to publicize the auction.

However, Hu Gang, vice dean of Beijing Chaoyang Law Office



## Students For Sale

A private college in Xi'an auctions ten graduate students

About 200 students standing in front of the Beijing Youth Daily Building for the job special issue published by Beijing Youth Daily March 17.

Photo by Lily

said the whole process of selling college students was illegal.

"It's illegal for the college to use people as auction objects," said Hu. According to him, the judicial explanation of an auction is a public sale in which property or products are sold to the highest bidder. "College students are not products and they're nobody's property, so they can't be auctioned off," he said.

The conduct of the auction was also illegal, said Hu. "The college doesn't have the qualifications for this kind of business action, and it didn't get permission from the public security department. The college should be held responsible."

Feng Min, famous educator and professor in Beijing Film Academy said being auctioned off might be good for getting higher salaries, but that the students were sacrificing their independence and dignity. "It's dangerous when the employees have to do what the employers want them

to do just for money," she said.

Should colleges help students find a job in this way? Is it a blessing when students get a job from being auctioned? Is it undignified? What's more important, dignity or a job? Opinions follow:

### Xie Ming, law student at Renmin University of China

There are no free lunches in the world. If you want to get something, you have to lose something first. It's not nice to think of being watched and chosen by employers, just like masters selecting slaves in ancient times. But it's also a shame to go back home and tell your parents you haven't been able to find a job.

When you think of your family's expectations and what they have sacrificed in raising you and supporting your studies, the damage to your dignity from something like this doesn't seem all that bad.

Besides, standing on a stage

isn't all that shameful. It's part of the modern era for people to show themselves and be pro-active. Luck will always favor the brave.

I admire these students, and if there are such opportunities at my university I won't hesitate to be an auction object.

### Guo Wei, writer for Beijing Star Daily

This kind of auction should be stopped, because it's disrespectful to the college students. It deprives them of the right to choose their employer from the beginning. When the gavel falls, the students don't know who will own them and whether they will like the company.

The students probably thought they had no choice. Many of them may have wanted other jobs, but because of the fierce competition in the employment market, they feel they have to take any opportunity that comes along.

Finding a job is just like finding a lover. Interviews, like dates, offer an opportunity for both sides to fall in love first before getting married. But in auctions, only companies get to make the choice. This makes divorce more likely.

### Gong Dazhong, news analyst at Sina.com.cn

Ten years ago, if someone had said you were a commodity you would have been angry because of the Marxist principle that labor isn't a commodity. But today nobody cares about that. The most important thing is finding a job.

Auction is just a name. We shouldn't worry so much about it. What we really should care about is helping students find jobs they are suited to and help them contribute to the nation.

### Dai Tong, a student in the Business School of Beijing University

Not every student is more in-

terested in money than dignity. The company can pay a high salary to get the students' labor but it can't buy their dignity.

Besides, when considering a job, salary is only one factor. The company's future, work and training opportunities it offers, and company welfare should also be considered. Sometimes students will choose a company that can't offer a high salary, just because they love it or because the company can offer good opportunities for further study or promotion.

However, in an auction all points are neglected except money. It's unfair to the students. In my opinion, this is nothing but self-publicizing by the college. I think the real aim was not to offer employment opportunities to students but to advertise for the college. They just wanted to show how excellent their students were and that so many companies had gathered to recruit them.

By Zhang Qian / Chen Ying

For local schools worried about legal gray areas in dealing with accidents involving students, help is at hand. The government is about to publish the *Prevention and Disposal Ordinance for Beijing Municipal Primary School and Middle School Students' Accidents*.

But the Beijing Municipal People's Government Legal Affairs Office is still mulling the plan. The office decided to collect opinions and advice about the ordinance from citizens by publishing a copy of it on its homepage from March 5 to 25.

According to the document, schools should not be held legally responsible for students' physical injuries, provided the schools have observed and implemented due safety regulations.

There are more than 300 million students in China, according to China Children and Teenagers' Fund. More than 10 thousand primary school and middle school students die in school accidents every year. School administrators are having a hard time dealing with the incidents as many parents think the schools should be held responsible.

There are four main problems: some schools lack awareness of the importance of safety; there are different views about the nature of the school's responsibility; there are few laws determining

responsibility; and there is no established procedure for dealing with accidents.

The Ministry of Education issued a document titled "Students' physical injury accident procedure" on September 1 last year. "But it's just an administrative document," said Zhao Yanning, a spokeswoman for the Legal Affairs Office.

Zhao says the office intends for the new ordinance to help prevent accidents at school as well as in determining who is responsible. "Every party should observe their duty when accidents happen. I hope the ordinance will be useful for courts in judging cases in which students have suffered physical injury at school," she added.

Should schools always be held accountable for accidents inside school grounds? Is the ordinance reasonable? The following are opinions from people who have read the ordinance:

### Zhu Hongwen, father of a first-grade middle school student

Every one knows that parents are the guardians of their chil-

dren until they become adults and should be responsible for their actions. But who will be responsible if parents cannot carry out their supervision? The fact is teenagers have to stay at school for more than 10 hours every day from Monday to Friday, as well as on some weekends.

Legal issues are more important in society today. Responsibilities are becoming clearer than ever. But this ordinance is more about how to reduce the school's liability. It may cause some negative results.

For instance, schools should be exempt from responsibility for accidents if they have taken proper safety measures. But should a school be exempt from responsibility if a student committed suicide following harsh treatment from teachers? Laws and regulations should be about morality and responsibility as well as determining legal liability.

### Qian Zhiliang, secretary of the Chinese Communist Party branch, the Experimental Primary School of Beijing Normal University

To protect every child's safety

at school is every teacher's wish and duty. Accidents will happen for all kinds of reasons, such as personal knowledge, social skills, self-protection awareness, the school's environment and local population density.

Also the reality that there is only one child in most families puts teachers and administrators under a lot of pressure. The schools have to cope with a great deal of responsibility.

### Tong Lihua, vice president of Beijing Minor Law Institute

The value of this ordinance is to make the school's responsibility clear. Schools and teachers would be wrong to think the ordinance is just to protect schools. It's very important to avoid providing convenience to schools who want to avoid their responsibility. But now we have an increasing number of legal

provisions to regulate schools' responsibility. So there are two keys for this case. Administrators and teachers should realize that going to court is an effective way of resolving disputes.

Furthermore, like some foreign countries, the government should set up a school insurance system and social security system. In this way, insurance companies can compensate students in cases where the school has done its duty and is not liable. Students can also get compensation if their parents have insured them for accidents which are their own fault. When this situation arises, I believe there will be no disputes or shirking of responsibility by parents or schools.

## Who's Responsible Here?

Local government tries to clarify responsibility for students' accidents

### SOUND BITES

"Severe acute respiratory syndrome is a dramatic example of the importance of global surveillance and response capacity."

— Dr. James Hughes at the US Center for Disease Control. Experts at the World Health Organization (WHO) said the atypical pneumonia has spread to Europe, North America and Australia from Asia. The WHO issued its first global health alert in a decade on March 15.

"We live in a time where we

have fictitious election results that elect a fictitious president. We live in a time where we have a man sending us to war for fictitious reasons whether it's the fiction of duct tape or the fiction of orange alerts. We are against this war, Mr. Bush. Shame on you, Mr. Bush. Shame on you."

— Filmmaker Michael Moore, accepting the Oscar for best documentary feature at the 75th Annual Academy Awards on Sunday.

"The council has remained

silent until today. And while the council remains silent, stark images of this 21st century war are seen all around the world continuously."

— Malaysia's UN Ambassador Rastam Mohamed Isa, whose country chairs the Non-Aligned Movement, speaking at Wednesday's UN Security Council meeting. The Non-Aligned Movement, which represents about 115 mainly developing countries, and the 22-member Arab League have both asked the Security Council to denounce the military action in Iraq.

By Chen Ying



# Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Boss?

By Su Wei

Li Tao, 26, software engineer of a domestic company in Beijing: "I 'sacked' my boss. It wasn't a question of salary — I was making over 5,000 yuan a month. Just this year, the company began expanding its business to Southern China. The only reason is that I couldn't stand the boss. He was selfish, short-sighted..." Li Tao quit his job after the Spring Festival.

Wang Lin, 36, accountant, single parent of a five-year-old daughter: "He drove me mad. He was a workaholic. I worked overtime almost every day and every weekend. For low salary and no extra pay. I need to spend time with my family. I need to save money for my daughter." Wang Lin 'sacked' her boss earlier this month.

## Employee vs. employer

Bai Ling, a job assessment consultant in Beijing, handles over two hundred cases each year related to the tense relationship between employee and employer. "Around 80 percent are employees with negative feelings towards their bosses. Some even consider quitting their jobs at least once a month, for the sole reason that they don't get along well with their boss," she says.

A spokesman for the People's Supreme Court says that 76,300 cases investigated last year involved the relationship between employee and employer, a 170 percent increase over 1995 when the Labor Law first went into effect, and a 52 percent increase over 2001.

Xing Ying, a deputy depart-

ment director of the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, says employees' complaints reveal their lack of loyalty to the company. "The employees quit their jobs either because they may get a better offer elsewhere or because they think the firm has no future. So they choose to either passively protest or simply find a new job."

## Managing mindsets

"He is the Queen bee, lounging around all day and nitpicking about my job," says Liu Hua, who has been working for an interior decoration company in Shenzhen, Guangdong Province for less than a year. "I am a worker bee. In his eyes I should never rest. The more I work and the less I make, the happier he is." Liu is happy to leave the company.

Liu's colleague Yan Yun, a secretary, complains of the "over-thriftiness" of their boss. "Less than 3,000 yuan per month. Lunch not included. No overtime pay. So if I work overtime I have to pay for two meals myself"

But paying for the extra meal is not the only annoyance of working overtime. She claims her boss's wife habitually comes by the office after hours to "spy" on them and check to see if the boss is also working late. "What kind of person do they think I am? Not only cheap, ignorant labor being exploited by the boss, but a woman with no dignity in the eyes of his wife." She says in the past year, three of her colleagues resigned, two of whom were women.

While some bosses are cheap, others are just plain ruthless.

Zhang Wei, who graduated from Zhejiang University with a major in management in 2001, lost another job after just a few months right before the Spring Festival. "I never understood why I would always get fired immediately after the trial period expired. The only reason they gave is that I am incapable for the job." As it turns out, his most recent unemployed status was the result of his boss wanting to bring his niece into the private computer company. "For them I'm the ideal candidate — a person without a permanent residence permit in Beijing who can do temp work during the trial period."

Zong Libo, a salesman in a private building materials manufacturing company in Beijing, describes his former boss in three words: "cold, calculating and crafty." He remembers once returning to the office from a full hard day's work with over two hundred purchase orders, ten times more than any of his colleagues. "All my colleagues were impressed with my sales, but my boss remained cold," recalls Zong.

Another time, his boss asked him to establish a sub-branch in Tianjin, promising him half of the sub-branch's profits. "Since the revenue was around three million yuan for the first year, I was expecting at least 200,000 yuan. But the boss said the sub-branch accounts were terrible, and that the total profits were less than 100,000 yuan." Zong received only 2,000 yuan, after being told that "the company was having financial difficulties."

At the end of the second year, Zong again asked for his due share of the profits. This time the boss agreed without hesitation — to give him equal value in building materials, as "financial conditions had improved, but the company was still cash poor." Zong quit early this year, with his last month's salary of over 10,000 yuan unpaid. "He told me that I didn't handle the relationship with the clients properly. What a lame excuse."

## Mediating respect

Discrimination is another problem, especially among Chinese middle managers and foreign senior managers in large foreign enterprises or joint ventures. Wang Yutian is one of the few local Chinese managers of an American company in Beijing, where most managers are either from Hong Kong or America. "I have been in this position for over three years. But while my monthly salary is just a little over 8,000 yuan, the Hong Kong or American managers at the same level earn around 30,000 yuan."

He says whenever overtime work is required, the local managers are usually the first in line. "The worst is that whenever there is some dispute between my employees and those under a foreign manager, it's almost always my employees who take the blame. So even my own employees don't respect me," he complains.

## Backlash of the bosses

"Neither 'the boss is depriving the employee,' nor 'the boss must promote the employee' are accurate statements," says Xing Ying. "Employer and employee are sim-

ply two distinct job classifications and two kinds of social roles. These two roles may be reversed instantly. Today's employees may very well become tomorrow's bosses."

"I'll admit that a boss is sometimes not as reliable as he or she should be, and that employees may even quit their jobs because of them. But let's just remember that it's not easy to be a boss," replies Deng Ye, manager in an online entertainment company. He knows that some of his employees once complained of unfair treatment for not having positions compatible with their capabilities. "I know I should allow them to learn more and give them more opportunities for development. But experience has taught me that the more they learn, the more eager they are to be their own boss."

Statistics from the State Commercial and Industrial Bureau show that every day, at least eight hundred companies are established, but that around 80 percent of them expire within five years.

Chen Xing, manager in an Internet security company in Zhongguancun, Haidian District, Beijing, does not understand why he is regarded as "a ruthless, inhuman being" by his employees. "I work for all my employees! Because I am a manager, I have to spend more time on the endless details of keeping the company running, making profit for the company, and maintaining everyone's salary as high as it should be. I realize that I need to communicate more, but my employees should also make an effort to understand my position and the competition that we're up against. If each side only fights for its own interests, then one of us will have to give way eventually, and the company is sure to sink in the short-term."

## Terms of endorsement

Last year, Li Bo, a freelance writer in his spare time, published *The Boss is Unreliable*, based on his own work experience and the misadventures of one surnamed Liu, a laid-off skilled technician from a clock manufacturing company in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province. Liu went

through over one hundred jobs during the following ten years. Each time, the reason given for his termination was "incapable."

"Bosses personalize capital," says Li Bo. "They are money-making machines with a human mask." While Li is tolerant of relatively unqualified bosses in China, he has seen them learn quickly from experience. "These people were already poorly qualified when they first became managers, so even now they are far from perfect, no matter what our expectations and requirements. Just like everyone else, these bosses have no idea and no experience of the market economy. Fierce competition on the market has shortened the life cycle of the smaller businesses. From the boss's standpoint, the number one priority is survival." Thus emerges the selfish nature of human beings.

Xing Ying says that employees should take some share of responsibility for the disputes which arise between them and their employers. She suggests that some employees ask only what their company can do for them, rather than what they can do for their company. "They rarely ask themselves what skills they might lack for the jobs to which they aspire and what kind of efforts they need to make."

Yu Xin is the only employee who admitted to *Beijing Today* that he may have been biased toward his previous bosses, after changing jobs three times before finally settling down in a public television company for the past four years. "I graduated from Beijing University with a major in Chinese. Then I worked successively as a financial reporter, a sales representative and a personnel manager. Each time I quit my job for the same reason — I didn't like my boss's personality. I found them either hot-tempered, money-minded or simply ignorant."

His present boss may be just as bad, "or even worse than the previous ones," but Yu Xin is happy with his job. "Maybe because I realize now what I want for myself, I can accept my boss for what he is."

Photo/Tony Stone

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## Deng Yaping Joins Organizing Committee

BOCOG has added a new, high-profile member to its staff. At a press conference held on February 24 in Beijing, the committee welcomed four-time Olympic gold medalist Deng Yaping to its team.

Under the title of "Program Expert", Deng will work in BOCOG's Marketing Department, where her main responsibility will be attracting domestic sponsors.

"Today is my first day at work at the committee. It's an honor to work here, and I feel

I am up to this new challenge," Deng said at the press conference.

"I hope that with my personal influence and charm, I can make a contribution to the Beijing Olympic Games," the former table tennis champ added. "Of course, doing a good job will require team work and cooperation with my colleagues."

Not only an accomplished athlete, Deng received a bachelor's degree from Tsinghua University in 2001, a master's from Not-

tingham University in the UK in 2002, and is currently pursuing a PhD in economics at Cambridge University. She is also a member of the International Olympic Committee's Athletes' Commission, Sport and Environment Commission and the IOC 2000 Reform Follow-up Commission. When asked whether her studies could have an impact on her work at BOCOG, she said the job would always come first.

## More New Faces for Organizing Committee

BOCOG's first open recruitment drive has closed, with 42 of the 3,700 applicants being employed by the committee. Following a three-day training program, new employees have started work in their new jobs.

The 42 new employees have a wide range of work experience, and share advanced education backgrounds, outstanding English language skills and other qualifications.

Fourteen of the 56 positions BOCOG planned to fill remain open for application.

The committee is expected to employ

4,000 staff by 2008, 36 times the present number, and preparations are now underway to put in place a long-term talent-search program.

Because of the limited number of positions available currently, some highly qualified applicants may not be employed immediately. However, all applicants' data will be entered into BOCOG's human resources database, and some applicants will be re-considered for new vacancies in the future.



Liu Xingchang (left) and Chen Jingyuan: BOCOG's new staff.



# Cinema Paradiso, Chinese-Style



Photos by Zhuang Jian

By Hu Xiaoli

“I watched a film till three last night and got up at eight this morning,” says Chen Shan, a professor of film theory at Beijing Film Academy (BFA). But instead of yawning through the interview, he’s full of energy and enthusiasm for his favorite subject. “I watch at least one film every day,” he says. His life now mainly revolves around films, books, lessons and lectures at the BFA. Having had his career as a teacher uprooted by the political turmoil of the Cultural Revolution, 58-year-old Chen is making up for lost time.

## Grand Opening

Chen was born in Shanghai on September 2 1945, the day Japan formally surrendered at the end of World War Two. “I was welcomed into the world with the sound of fireworks and cheers outside,” Chen says.

He grew up surrounded by a love of music and stories. “My father loved collecting records,” says Chen. On hot summer evenings, little Chen would sit at home with his father listening to classical music while his mother and siblings were outside in the cool open air. “A broken phonograph was the main toy of my childhood,” he smiles.

“My mother was crazy about Chinese swordsman stories and was always reading them to me,” Chen continues. She passed on her enthusiasm so effectively that Chen later wrote a book called *The History of Chinese Swordsmen*.

“Also I had an aunt, eight years older than me,” he recalls. She bought four-year-old Chen a comic book called *San Mao’s Wandering Stories* (*San Mao Liu Lang Ji*), one of the most popular comic books in China. Little Chen loved it and has been addicted to books ever since. He even began to write novels when he was 14, but he never showed them to others. “I was a very timid boy at that time and I wrote the stories only for myself,” he explains. He eventually overcame his timidity and found a love of communicating. The spur was an obsession

with movies which began in his childhood.

## In a Darkened Room

Chen claims to remember going to see his first film - Disney’s *Snow White* - even though he was only two years old at the time. “It was an autumn evening. My mother held me in her arms, waiting outside the cinema for my father.” Chen still remembers some details of that day, “but I can’t recall any of the film,” he laughs.

Chen’s real film education came from film brochures collected by his father, in which the film synopsis and the stars were introduced. “I pored over every line,” says Chen. At seven he was a regular cinemagoer. Every Sunday morning, local cinemas would show films for children. It cost only one Jiao to get in at that time. “It was a film festival for all the children. We cheered, played, made noise and enjoyed every minute inside the cinema.” The film *Cinema Paradiso*, all about a youngster obsessed with movies, is one of Chen’s favorites. He hopes a Chinese version of *Cinema Paradiso* might be made someday.

## From Shanghai to Beijing

Chen says Shanghai and Beijing are the two most important cities in his life. “Shanghai is open-minded and vigorous. Living there taught me to see the world with an open mind,” says Chen. Standing up, he takes something from the top of the bookshelf. “My father collected these before the liberation,” Chen says, taking out some small cards decorated with stories and pictures. They were cards with pictures and stories on them that used to be put in cigarette boxes. “My father smoked and I read the stories.”

Beijing, however, was still a mysterious and attractive place for young Chen at that time. “I was not allowed to go to school outside Shanghai,” Chen recalls. But in 1964, 19-year-old Chen got his wish and enrolled in the Chinese Department of Beijing University, the most prestigious university in China. Only ten Shanghai students were enrolled that year.

Young Chen quickly and happily immersed himself in the new learning atmosphere in Beijing University, but the Cultural Revolution broke his happiness a year later. At first, he was as active as other students, but he soon found that he didn’t trust the motives of some of his classmates. Despite the iconoclasm of the times, Chen found he retained his respect for academia and China’s learning institutions. In order to escape from the political upheaval, he spent most of his time reading books and doing research in the department library where nearly no one came during that time. Once, he was locked in by the careless librarian, and had to wait the whole day before getting out to get some food. “Serving our country is not just reciting slogans, but seeking real knowledge as well,” Chen states seriously.

Chen says that nine years’ of studying at Beijing University, including postgraduate studies after the Cultural Revolution, shaped his later character. “I fell in love with the extraordinary culture of Beijing. Shanghai is my hometown, but Beijing is the home of my soul.”

## Teaching: the Only Way to Communicate

Chen describes himself as a silent type of person. “Teaching is the only way I can communicate with others,” he admits.

The Cultural Revolution had a major impact on his academic career. After graduating from Beijing University, Chen was sent to a remote village in Faku County, Liaoning Province, to teach Chinese in a middle school. He designed the courses by himself and found that he enjoyed teaching the local children. A year and a half later, he was assigned to a middle school in the county. “The students didn’t like me because I gave them more homework than the other teachers,” Chen recalls with a smile, “but they understood me when they grew up.” Indeed, many of Chen’s former students have got in contact with him many years later. Chen continued his academic

research at the same time as teaching. He stayed in Faku for eight years. He wrote several books on Chinese history as well as a dictionary of Chinese idioms and got married to a girl from Beijing who had had a similar experience to his.

After the Cultural Revolution, Chen returned to Beijing University and got a master’s degree three years later. But he had to return to Liaoning to be with his wife who was not allowed to leave Faku county. “The biggest disappointment in my life was missing out on the chance of being a teacher at Beijing University,” Chen says.

But in 1992, Chen finally got to combine his love of movies with his academic career. Chen and his wife returned to Beijing, and Chen began to teach film theory at the BFA. “I was happy to be teaching something I felt so passionate about,” Chen says. He feels film is still the most avant-garde area of culture today, and the one most closely in touch with the times. His lessons have become more and more popular at the BFA partly because of his unusual point of view. He feels too many film students are obsessed with making obscure art house movies and that there is a need to strike a balance with more mainstream movies that people will actually want to see and that can develop the industry. “I think Ang Lee (director of *The Hulk* and *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*) and Zhang Yimou (director of *Hero*) are two successful examples of this,” he says. “How to use our traditional culture in movies and develop a mature film industry are the crucial issues for Chinese film-makers nowadays.”

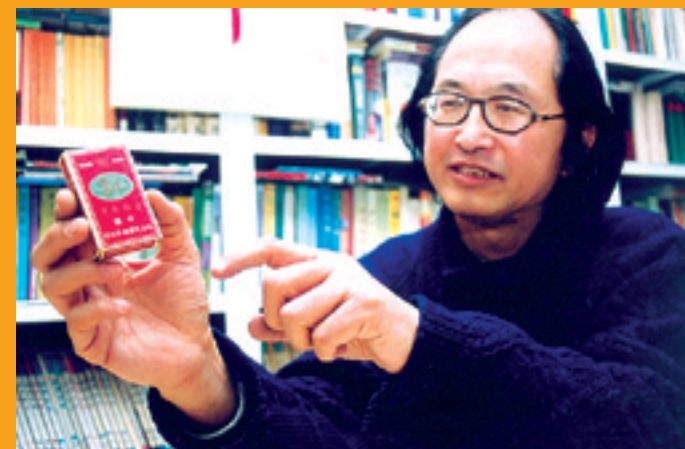
Collecting films and film information, preparing for his lectures and teaching at the BFA and other institutes take up most of his time these days. Going out with his wife on Sundays is one of the few times of leisure for him. But it’s what he wants, and something he’s waited for long enough. The telephone is ringing and Chen excuses himself for an appointment with a student.



Chen teaches at the Beijing Film Academy.



Chen talks with students after class.



Cigarette boxes of old Shanghai are Chen’s beloved collector’s items.



Chen’s wife is his loyal assistant in life and work.





# Discoveries Shed New Light on Ancient Kingdom



By Yi Yi

Since its discovery in 1901 by Swedish explorer Sven Heding, the ruins of the ancient kingdom of Loulan have been a source of fascination for generations of archeologists and explorers. The recent discovery of a tomb near the city ruins, with an unusually long entrance tunnel and two chambers decorated with colorful frescoes, has once again brought the name of Loulan into the limelight.

After investigating the tomb, Zhang Yuzhong, deputy director of the Xinjiang Cultural Relics and Archaeology Research Institute, told Xinhua news agency, "It is of great significance in terms of helping solve the mystery of the disappearance of Loulan."

Loulan, capital of the Loulan kingdom, was a small, prosperous commercial city on the Silk Road about 2,000 years ago. Some time during the third century AD, it disappeared, apparently swallowed up by the surrounding desert. The city was located on what was the west bank of Lop Nor, now a vast expanse of sand dunes between the Gobi and the Taklimakan deserts, in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region.

## The tomb

The tomb lies 320 kilometers east of the county seat of Ruoqiang, 23 kilometers south of the ruins of Loulan.

It was discovered by a team of explorers headed by Zhao Ziyun in December last year. The Yulin Daily, (a local Xinjiang newspaper) revealed in February that it had been robbed shortly before the arrival of the first team of explorers, and speculated that it might be the tomb of a king. With the blessing of the State Cultural Relics Bureau, a team of archaeologists headed by Zhang Yuzhong set out from Urumchi, reaching the tomb on February 20.

After a one-month dig, the team publicized their discoveries last week, which consisted of some human bones, two pieces of well-preserved colored coffin planks decorated with cloud, grass and leaf designs, a colorful blanket, fabrics, colored arrow shafts and an ivory comb.

## The frescoes

The front and rear chambers of the tomb, as well as the central column in the front chamber, are decorated with frescoes. Although a number of tombs have been unearthed in the vicinity of Loulan, this is the first to have been found to contain frescoes.



Xinhua Photos

## 100 years later, the enigma remains

From March 3 to 14, 1901, Swedish explorer Sven Heding excavated 13 sites of the ancient Loulan Kingdom, taking home with him hundreds of relics such as silk, bamboo slips, wood carvings, Chinese and Roman coins and bronze mirrors.

His discoveries triggered a craze over the mysterious kingdom that has lasted for over a hundred years.

In 1906 and 1914, British explorer Aurel Stein carried out extensive surveys of the Loulan site.

In 1927, Heding organized a Sino-Swedish inspection team to visit Loulan, but Huang Wenbi, the Chinese archaeologist, was unable to cross the Fenghuang River and never made it to Loulan.

On October 16, 1964, China detonated its first nuclear bomb at Lop Nor, and Loulan became a military zone off-limits to civilians.

In 1979, a team of Chinese archaeologists arrived at Loulan via helicopter, becoming the first Chinese team to visit the site.

On December 22, 1979, an archaeological team headed by Wang Binhua discovered the Gumugou burial ground, which pushed the date of the beginning of the Loulan civilization back to the Bronze Era 3,800 years ago.

In 1980, archaeologist Mu Shunying discovered a female mummy, which later became known as the "Loulan Beauty."

Since 1979, more and more remains of the lost kingdom have been found, attracting the attention of archaeologists around the world, yet Loulan remains as much of an enigma as it was 100 years ago.

## Differing viewpoints

American explorer Ellsworth Huntington believed that the climate of the Tarim Basin became progressively drier, triggering massive environmental changes. Lop Nor, once a large inland sea, shrank gradually with the dry weather and the volume of rain reduced by 30 percent, forcing the inhabitants of Loulan to relocate.

British explorer Aurel Stein thought that the climate of the Tarim Basin had always been dry, and that the disappearance of the Loulan kingdom was a result of the shrinking of glaciers in the Kunlun Mountains and consequent decrease in volume of the rivers they fed.

Chen Ruguo, a researcher at the Chinese Academy of Sciences, believes that the changing route of the Silk Road directly affected the economic prosperity of Loulan, while the environmental changes caused by the shrinking of the rivers was also a key factor in its disappearance.

Xia Xuncheng, also a researcher at the Chinese Academy of Sciences, argues that the Loulan Kingdom, situated in a pivotal location connecting east and west, subsisted mainly on stock raising, fishing and hunting, and farming. Its disappearance could only have been caused by comprehensive political, economic and environmental changes.

Zhang Yuzhong says that though some of the heads of the figures are smudged, the fluent and simple style in the line and color is still clearly discernible.

On the right side of the front chamber door, a seated figure is depicted, and on the left side is a one-horned animal. Six figures are painted on the east wall, male and female, some of the men are bearded, some hold a cup or bowl. This is believed to represent a scene from the daily life of the tomb's occupant. Two camels, one red, one white, are each biting the back leg of the other. Behind each camel stands a man holding a long rod, pointing at the camels' mouths. On the right side of the north wall of the back chamber door, a man with a horse is depicted. The four walls in the back chamber feature the same designs with the central column.

## The occupants

As for the status of the tomb's occupants, the size of the chamber, the frescoes on the walls of the front and rear chambers – especially the depictions of the elaborately dressed male and female figures on the east wall of the front chamber all indicate their nobility. The items recovered from the tomb and the colorful designs on the coffin planks all indicate that it belonged to a noble family around the third century AD.

The long entrance tunnel, the frescoes and the design of the tomb chamber are characteristic of tombs from around the beginning of the first century AD, and were common during the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220 AD). Chamber tombs with frescoes from the Eastern Han to the Eastern Jin dynasties (220-420AD) were excavated previously in the nearby areas such as Jiquuan and Dunhuang in Gansu Province. The inhabitants of those tombs were all eminent local families.

According to historical records from the Han Dynasty, in 77 AD, the kingdom of Loulan moved its capital to nearby Nichen, and changed its name to Shanshan, however, other than this mention, little is known about the kingdom and its disappearance. Zhang Yuzhong says that even if the ruins actually are those of the ancient capital of the Loulan Kingdom, any king buried there must have been entombed before 77 AD, furthermore, the tomb of a king should be close to the ancient city, not 20 kilometers away.

"In terms of both chronology and location, it's not possible that the tomb is the burial place of a King of Loulan."

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# Weighing the Pros and Cons of Ratings



A promotional poster for Rice

By Yu Shanshan

Following years of being barred from cinemas nationwide, the domestic film *Rice*, directed by Huang Jianzhong, was finally scheduled to premiere on March 24. Before screenings began, however, the Film Division of the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television cancelled all shows on the grounds that the movie could have "misleading effects on audiences."

The distributor of the film, Shanghai Golden Harvest Entertainment Co., has suggested *Rice* be allowed to be screened, but carry a label of "not suitable for children," a rating that first appeared on the 1989 film *Widow Village*.

Talk of ratings has been in the air all month, first sparked by a motion filed at the Tenth Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference by playwright and committee member Wang Xingdong to establish a more clear-cut film rating system.

The rumor that has raised the most eyebrows says that the Film Division is working on a rating system that could be put into place in the second half of this year. The administration has yet to release any official word, although there is reason to be skeptical. An anonymous staff member



Tao Zeru (left) and Shi Lan (right) in a scene from Rice

from the administration's PR department told *Beijing Today*, "Drawing up a rating system would be too complicated."

Wang said, "My intention in making the motion was simply to benefit and protect our children." Two years ago, while interviewing juvenile delinquents in research for the script to the film *Judge Mama*, he came to believe most young people that commit crimes are merely imitating what they have seen in movies and television. With that in mind, Wang proposed a system with three basic ratings: "not suitable for children", "children only" and "general audiences".

According to Yin Hong, a professor at the School of Journalism and Mass Communi-

cation at Tsinghua University, most movies shown at cinemas nationwide, including domestic and foreign films, would fall under the PG rating according to the system used by the Motion Picture Association of America. That rating stands for "parental guidance suggested", indicating films may include some material deemed not appropriate for children, such as bad language, violence and sexually suggestive scenes.

Many domestic directors have made statements supporting the creation of a movie rating system, for the reason that the current censorship system is confusing and vague. They are particularly troubled by the film administration's policy that all films must be suitable for audiences of all ages. That is a rule some directors feel makes it inevitable that they sacrifice parts of their artistic vision. According to famed filmmaker Zhang Yimou, "it's very hard to make a movie that everyone from eight to eighty can appreciate."

At the same time, it is difficult to predict how the Film Division will move on any given movie, and some with questionable content make it to theaters unscathed. Sun Zhou, director of *Zhou Yu's Train*, a film currently screening nationwide, was surprised that some relatively explicit sex scenes in the movie had spared the censor's knife. He ended up even adding to those scenes before the film premiered.

Regarding those scenes, Sun said, "I think that nowadays Chinese have more open minds towards sex. But I am still quite worried about children seeing this film, because it is obviously beyond their understanding. I think a film rating system is urgently needed so directors like myself can feel more comfortable and have definite target audiences."

A heavily-trafficked forum on Sina.com addresses the question of what standards should be used in a possible rating system. One common concern is that any system may prove completely ineffective because VCD and DVD versions of movies of all ratings can be bought on street corners throughout the country.

Many of those who have joined the forum have also expressed worries that a protective system could encourage the filming of movies loaded with sex and violence, and that restrictive ratings may only increase public interest in such films. "Without rules for rigorous enforcement by theaters, children will have access to sexually explicit and violent movies," said Qi Shilong, a professor at the Beijing Film Academy.

Wang Xingdong acknowledges that a rating system cannot completely take the place of vigorous censorship. "It would only be a part of the general censorship system. No government in the world can solely rely on a rating system. Plus, cinemas would have to be given the right to restrict audiences to people of a certain age for certain movies," he said.

However, some theater owners do not seem enthusiastic about that idea. "Restricting audiences will lead to smaller audiences, and that's bad for box office sales," said Wang Yuming, manager of the Honglou Cinema in Xisi.

Ironically, the current censorship system may have the opposite effect. Huang Jianzhong believes the restrictions put on *Rice* may work out to his benefit. "The public curiosity created by the administration's decision could lead to better box office results," he said.

## Life on High, High on Life

By Qiao Luqiang

Artist Dong Fang was born to be wild. A native of Qinghai Province and graduate of the Art Academy of the People's Liberation Army in Beijing, the painter was looking for inspiration in April 2000. So, he hopped on his motorcycle and headed to Tibet.

Dong ended up spending three years traveling to every corner of the roof of the world, living with its people and taking part in their daily activities. He captured hours of fascinating video footage of his trek, a living record of local culture, art, religion, customs and life. The experience also provided the inspiration for a great outpouring of more personal artistic creation.

The Dao Pu Visual Arts Center is currently host to a show of over 20 of Dong's paintings and mixed media works crafted during his Tibet ventures. They stand out, in part, because of the artist's use of unusual materials, such as ground coffee, powdered gold and emulsion paint.

More outstanding, perhaps, are the themes. With these pieces, Dong seems to be asking such



Hurried Footprints, 2001



Equidistance, 2002

big questions as, "can people find a true environment of peace in a world full of anxiety, greed and hatred? Can nature inspire people to change, and can human really change their hearts and spirits?" While Dong may not have their answers, these pieces are sure to push viewers to do some soul-searching of their own.

**Where:** Dao Pu Visual Arts Center, No. A 5, Nongzhanguan Beilu, Beijing **When:** March 23 to April 1 **Tel:** 6501 1188 ext. 1886; 6593 5294

## Artistic Duet

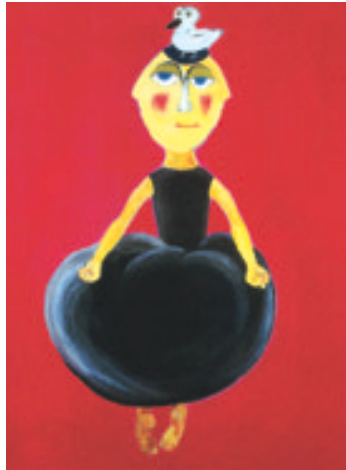
By Yu Shanshan

Tomorrow, a couple of young painters will hold their first exhibition at the Tao Gallery. Classmates and lovers Liu Xiaohui and Jiang Fang will show 25 ink wash works and oil paintings they have created since 1999, when both graduated from the Central Academy of Fine Arts.

Most of Liu's 15 washes are landscapes and still lifes, though they depart from tradition because of their abstract feel. He uses the same tools and materials as orthodox washes, but puts little emphasis on heavy contrast and large blank spaces. Instead, images are vaguely portrayed, ink is splashed around without structure and the paper covered in fragmented lines and blotches.

Jiang is also not one to be held back by rigid traditional standards. But where Liu goes for subtlety, she shoots over the top. With exaggerated colors and thick, simplistic lines and poses, she creates idealistic and romantic images of young women that seem almost girlish.

**When:** March 29 to April 18 **Where:** Tao Gallery, second floor of Zhongliang Plaza, 8 Jianguomennei Avenue **Tel:** 8511 8611



Untitled No. 1, Jiang Fang, 2002



Lotus Pond No. 4, Liu Xiaohui, 2002

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By Dong Nan

To the disappointment of many Chinese movie fans, Zhang Yimou's martial arts historical epic *Hero* failed to grab the Oscar for best foreign language film at the 75th Annual Academy Awards Sunday.

The award went instead to *Nowhere in Africa*, a German film about the challenges faced by a German Jewish family who flee to Kenya after the Nazis take control of their homeland.

Zhang himself was philosophical about his chances of winning. "After *Crouching Tiger*,

# No Oscar for Hero



Zhang Yimou in Los Angeles  
Photo by Zheng Ye

*Hidden Dragon's* success, it will be hard for a film of the same genre to win the same award within such a short time," he told *Beijing Youth Daily* the day before the awards ceremony.

*Hero* is the third film directed by Zhang to be nominated for an Academy Award, following 1991's *Ju Dou* and 1992's *Raise the Red Lantern*.

According to a report in *Beijing Youth Daily*, MGM was perhaps not the best choice for *Hero's* American release. There have been widespread mutterings that the US studio deliberately held back the release of the movie, to avoid conflicting with its own hits, including *Chicago*, *Gangs of New York* and *The Hours*.



Li Min at a press conference  
Photo by Huang Liang

## Hani Beauty Charms Beijing

By Nebula Dong

Li Min, a beautiful Hani nationality 17 year old, is hot property as far as the local media is concerned, following last weekend's Beijing premiere of her debut movie *When Ruoma Was Seventeen*.

The lyrical movie, which was well received at the Berlin International Film Festival last month, tells the story of the native one-sided love affair between an ordinary Hani girl, Ruoma, and a young boy from a distant big city, and her desperate longing for the outside world.

Li was born in a small town in Yunnan Province and has had no professional training. With a brilliant smile, fresh style and colorful Hani dress, she effortlessly charms the audience.

"We selected her from among some 2,000 local girls," says director Zhang Jiarui, "I believed that she was Ruoma herself the very first time I saw her."

Following in the footsteps of Gong Li and Zhang Ziyi, Li is the third Chinese actress to rise to fame after debuting at the Berlin International Film Festival. She has even been hailed by some as "the new Gong Li."

*When Ruoma Was Seventeen* has been entered in this August's Montreal International Film Festival, and is currently screening at cinemas around Beijing.

## Stars of Tomorrow Run through Wilderness

By Dong Nan

"I have been waiting for this day for three years, I am really proud of everyone," TV star Lü Liping said Saturday when the curtain came down on *Wilderness*, a graduation presentation by her students at the Stars Performance Arts School.

*Wilderness*, by Cao Yu, one of the most renowned Chinese dramatists of the last century, is a bleak story about revenge, adultery and murder in a northern China village, set in the early 1900's.

Depicting the conflicts between a tormented man with a morbid desire for vengeance, a beautiful and insatiable young woman, a blind and clearly psychologically disturbed old woman and a cowardly man with an Oedipus complex, the drama poses tremendous challenges to performers. The young actors did such a good job it was easy to forget that their average age was less than 18.

"I feel very lucky to have played the heroine in this masterpiece," said Wang Yang, "most actresses do not expect such an opportunity." She said she shed many tears after the play finished.

"This is the first time for a private school to stage such a large scale performance," said designer Sun Xuedong, "and for our students, it was really rewarding."

The play was staged at Beijing's Children's Theater last Saturday.



Wang Yang (right) and Lu Shican

## Irish Classics

By Dong Nan

Mention Irish music and many people will think of Enya, Sinead O'Connor and U2. However a concert tonight at the Forbidden City Concert



The Irish Chamber Orchestra

Hall by the Irish Chamber Orchestra presents a somewhat different slant.

The Irish Chamber Orchestra is one of Ireland's most accomplished ensembles. Consisting of some of the most accomplished of Irish string players, the group gives a new and refreshing perspective on the chamber music repertoire through its inimitable approach to performance.

*The New York Times* wrote that they "performed with a smoothness and mellowness of tone that seduced the ear."

"The sparkle of champagne with the body of Guinness," *The Times* (London) put it more literarily, "musical black velvet is the only way to describe the concert."

Conducted by principal guest director Mariana Sirbu, the concert will also feature Korean pianist Hae-Jung Kim as soloist.

The program includes Raymond Deane's *A Fire Was in My Head*, Shostakovich's *Piano Concerto No. 1*, and the ever popular *Four Seasons*, by Vivaldi.

## WORLDWIDE



Renee Zellweger wins best supporting role

### Chicago Wins Top Oscar

Movie musical *Chicago* won the Oscar for best film at the Academy Awards on Sunday, but it was a pair of stunning upset victories for *The Pianist* — director Roman Polanski and actor Adrien Brody — that gave the biggest surprises in a ceremony marked by talk of war.

For much of this year's awards season in Hollywood, *Chicago* had been a front-runner, and coming into the Oscars it was an odds-on favorite in many top categories with 13 nominations, more than any other film.

But its six awards came mostly in minor categories, and when star Renee Zellweger lost the best actress award to a tearful Nicole Kidman, star of drama *The Hours*, the musical about a pair of murdering actresses and the media who made them stars, seemed to have lost its steam. (Reuters)



Michael Moore lambastes Bush

### Political Oscar Speeches Vary in Tone

Victory speeches on Oscar night addressed the US led conflict in Iraq in dramatically different tones — Michael Moore was ferocious, Adrien Brody was heartfelt and Chris Cooper was subtle. Each drew dramatically different reactions.

Moore received a standing ovation when he won and his fiery criticism of President Bush and the war first drew cheers, followed by a cacophony of boos as he shouted: "We are against this war, Mr. Bush. Shame on you, Mr. Bush. Shame on you!"

Critical reaction was as varied as the Kodak Theatre's response to Moore's rant.

"Oscars turn to Bush-bash," proclaimed a headline in the *New York Post* on Monday, although Moore was the only winner to directly criticize the US president. (AP)

### Harry Potter Author J K Rowling Has Baby Boy

J K Rowling, author of the famed "Harry Potter" series, gave birth to a baby boy over the weekend in Scotland.

David Gordon Rowling Murray was born on Sunday afternoon at the New Royal Infirmary in Edinburgh, according to Rowling's spokeswoman Nicky Stonehill.

Rowling, one of Britain's wealthiest women, already has a 10-year-old daughter from her first marriage. She married her second husband Neil Murray two years ago.

The birth comes just three months before the much anticipated fifth installment of the Harry Potter series, *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* will be published on June 21. (Reuters)



Kenny Chesney on stage

### Chesney Dream Concert to Become Reality

Kenny Chesney's dream gig is about to become a reality.

The singer's all-day, all-night coming-home party at Neyland Stadium on June 7 will have him and other country acts playing to thousands of fans.

"We've been dreaming of doing this for a long time," he told AP Radio. "About four, five years ago, somebody asked me in an interview what would be the biggest thing I could possibly ever do. As a joke, I said maybe play Neyland Stadium one day ... and now we're getting ready to do that." (AP)



Susie Castillo, new Miss USA 2003

### Miss Massachusetts Crowned Miss USA 2003

Miss Massachusetts Susie Castillo was crowned Miss USA 2003 in the 52nd annual staging of the pageant Monday night.

Castillo, 23, of Lawrence, Mass., replaces Shauntay Hinton, who represented the District of Columbia in last year's event.

Castillo, an office manager and model, will be America's candidate in the Miss Universe pageant in June in Panama City, Panama.

A fluent Spanish speaker with Puerto Rican roots, Castillo said she would use her crown to try to raise the stature of the nation's Hispanic population. (AP)

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By Yu Yang

Exotic is always in fashion. And in this country, arguably nowhere is as exotic, remote and romanticized as Tibet. One of the area's more distinct art forms is jewelry, which fortunately for fashion-conscious Beijingers, is available in authentic form at several shops around the city, negating the need for a grueling trip all the way to the roof of the world.

Most pieces are crafted of silver, which comes in its pure form, or as *Zang* (Tibetan) silver, also called *paktong*, an alloy that has a silvery black look despite its low silver content. Real silver is more valuable and expensive than the Zang version, so it is important to be able to distinguish the two. First, paktong is harder than the pure form, so it cannot be carved or engraved with small patterns. A sure-fire way to test for silver type is to strike a piece on glass. Zang silver will have a distinct ring, while real silver will hardly produce a sound.

Decoration is done through inlaying decorative stones, such as turquoise, coral and black *qixing* stone. Each type of stone has a symbolic meaning, with bright red coral standing for good luck and turquoise of any color representing safety. Because such stones are all semi-precious, most Tibetan jewelry is relatively inexpensive. Sometimes cow bone is also used as a decoration or base material for jewelry.

Tibetan jewelry comes mostly in recognizable forms, such as rings, necklaces, bracelets and pendants. Among the more distinctive types of Tibetan jewelry are talismans, worn to ward away evil spirits, and *gawuhe*, silver box-like pendants, the Tibetan equivalents of lockets. They are filled with small objects such as a few small photos or perfume, keeping them safe and close to the heart.

Engraving is also an important part of Tibetan jewelry. Carved and inlaid designs cover a wide range of styles and subjects, such as animals, words from Buddhist scripture, images of the Buddha and other religious icons and scenes from daily life in the snowy plateau.



Thanga, 2,800 yuan

Photos by Peng Jianwei

# Tempting Tibetan Treasures

## Tastes of the Snowy Plateau

By Salinda

The owner of a popular, intimate Tibet-themed bar on Ping'an Dajie has decided to capitalize on that success by opening a store, Tian Tang Zhi Yue, in Xidan Culture Square.

Though small, the store is overflowing with authentic Tibetan goods. Some stands



Incense burner, 500 yuan

and bags with distinct Tibetan flavor are also on offer.

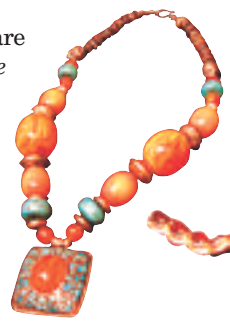
Most of the jewelry is silver-based and studded with turquoise, coral and *mila*, an amber-like material. The store's Tibetan owner designs all the pieces herself. Prices are reasonable, such as 150 yuan for a silver necklace carved with six Tibetan words

meant to ward away evil.

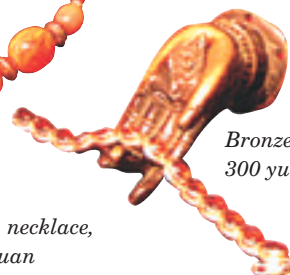
Especially impressive are the range of silver *gawuhe* boxes that go for 80 yuan to 160 yuan. Some have sides decorated with the *bajixiang*, the eight Buddhist symbols of luck. The surface of the most expensive of these boxes is beset with semi-precious stones and fetches over 1,000 yuan.

An easy way to add a Tibetan aura to a room is to cover a bare lightbulb with a rice paper lamp (60 yuan each). They fold flat, but can be easily pushed into a box shape to hang over a light fixture. Each side is painted with an image of the Buddha or other pictures, and the muffled light cast through the paper has a mystical, exotic feel.

**Where:** B2, Xidan Culture Square, Xicheng **Open:** 9:30 am - 9:30 pm **Tel:** 13520 444980



Amber necklace, 2,000 yuan



Bronze hand, 300 yuan

### Other stores to get it

#### Hailang Store:

**Add:** west of Longfusi, Dongsi

**Tel:** 13520 288628

#### Mingdiwang Store:

**Add:** No.4145, Yaxiu Clothes Market, Sanlitun

**Tel:** 13501 029913

#### Lhasa store:

**Add:** First floor, Mingzhu market, Xidan

**Tel:** 13001 203833

#### Zangshi store:

**Add:** opposite north entrance of Xindong'an, Wangfujing

**Tel:** 13910 906232



Talismans, 80 - 200 yuan

## Hidden Exotic Haven

By Salinda

For five years, Bar Street was the successful location of the Tibetan store Ai'er Wu. It moved to lower-profile spot in a cluster of residential buildings behind the northwest corner of Yaxiu Clothes Market a couple years ago, but has remained a great place to stock up on Tibetan tidbits.

One whole wall of Ai'er Wu is devoted to Tibetan jewelry of many forms, all priced at a reasonable 20 to 70 yuan per piece.

Jewelry, however, is not the store's only strong suit. One standout among the other items is a *jingang chu* (4,000 yuan), an instrument used in Buddhist ceremonies. It is made of brass and looks like a pestle, with three Buddha figures carved at its top.

Paktong silver shows up in non-jewelry pieces such as an ashtray shaped like a monkey head that fetches 300 yuan. Also on offer are some Tibetan clothes, priced from 100 to 300 yuan, and copper and wood masks, including a tortoise-shell mask inlaid with copper, brass and paktong that costs 280 yuan.

**Where:** 37, South Building, flat 1, Sanlitun Beijie, Chaoyang **Open:** 9 am - 10 pm **Tel:** 6417 5963



Photos by Li Shuzhan

Jingang chu

## Made in Paradise

By Lisha Huang

Tiantang Zhizao, which means "made in paradise", was one of the first Tibetan theme stores in Beijing and remains among the largest. It is run by a brother-sister team from the Kangba area of Tibet. Sister Lamu said, "All the jewelry and decorations we sell are made by our relatives and family members, making our store very different than the rest."

Perhaps the most striking item in the store is a thanga, a Tibetan silk scroll painting, bearing a golden image of the god of wealth against a black backdrop. Customers may be surprised at the 5,000 yuan price tag, but Lamu explains it is more than fair considering the valuable materials, such as gold, coral and turquoise, integrated into the work.

The store offers a variety of protective talismans, many decorated with coral and turquoise, which range in price from 50 to 160 yuan. More unusual items are six-sided Tibetan lamp covers (100-150 yuan). They are crafted from barley shell, but look like thick paper, and are painted with Tibetan words of prayer and religious symbols.

Silver wine bowls, a range of rings with turquoise or red coral, necklaces, bracelets and all sorts of jewelry made from yak bone round out the store's stock.

**Where:** 1 Jixiang Gongyi, Wangfujing Dajie (south of the church), Dongcheng **Open:** 9:30 am - 10 pm



Photos by Cui Hao

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## Sake Waterfall - Jiunailong Japanese Restaurant

By James Liu

This new restaurant's Japanese name, Sakenotaki, means a "waterfall of sake", and it has the booze to back it up. Since opening on February 16, it has tried to stake a place in the city's expansive ranks of Japanese restaurants by offering the largest range of Japanese sake (rice wine) and other spirits.

The mid-size restaurant can seat 150 in its main room, and offers four private tatami rooms for parties and business meals. Diners are greeted by kimono-garbed waitresses and given hot towels and barley tea immediately after sitting.



Shira Yuki and pickled vegetables

The food is good, better than at other Japanese restaurants on Xiaoyun Lu, but not totally authentic. The prawn tempura (60 yuan for six pieces) is tasty, but far greasier than fine tempura should be. Sukiyaki for two (120 yuan), made with beef and vegetables, is tender and delicious, though barely enough to fill two stomachs. Thanks to a 20 percent discount on all meals throughout March, prices have dropped from average to appealing.

Sakes range in price from 200 yuan for two liters to 1,980 yuan for a bottle of top stuff. A good bet is Shira Yuki sake, which offers a good balance of taste versus expense. Diners can feel free to order the big bottles, as the restaurant has a policy of letting customers take unfinished sake home.

Sakenotaki has entered the 68-yuan buffet lunch bunch, offering a tempting spread including sushi, rice and tempura.

**Add:** No. 15 Xiaoyun Lu, Chaoyang  
**Open:** 10 am - 2 pm, 5:30 - 10 pm **Tel:** 8454 5636 **Average cost:** 100 yuan per person and up



Dog meat hotpot, 50 yuan

## Small and Simple - Meihua Restaurant

By James Liu

This restaurant has a winning formula of heaping helpings of simple, tasty Korean and northeastern Chinese food at great prices. One signature dish is dog meat hotpot (*gourou huoguo*, 50 yuan). Other meaty options based on beef or ox tail taste heavy and spicy. Braised ox tails (*dun niuwei*, 30 yuan) is loaded with enough meat to satisfy four diners, while the ox tail soup (*niuwei tang*, 20) is thick and warming.

Like its décor, the restaurant's manager, Wu Lianji, is quite modest. "The place is quite shabby, and the dishes are similar to those in other restaurants," she says. False modesty, indeed. The Korean fare especially stands out among nearby competition, for flavor as well as price. Pickled vegetable hotpot with rice noodles (*paocai mitiao huoguo*, 30 yuan) is more than enough to fill one hungry customer, and braised angler fish (*dun ankangyu*, 35 yuan) is also worth a try.

**Add:** No. 15 Xiaoyun Lu, Chaoyang  
**Open:** 9 am - 2 pm, 5 - 10 pm **Tel:** 6467 9262 **Average cost:** 50 yuan per person

Though there are restaurants on nearly every block in this city, some streets have become veritable hubs for excellent dining. One such area is Xiaoyun Lu, a street outside the East Third Ring Road near the Lufthansa Center that is lined by over 30 restaurants covering a wide range of cuisines, from Korean and Japanese to Sichuan and Cantonese. Diners who want to keep the night going after a fine dinner can walk to the Kiss disco or Power House bar.

While Xiaoyun Lu is home to plenty of huge, popular restaurants like the Jinshancheng Chongqing Restaurant, Guangzhou Seafood Restaurant, Shuwang Hotpot Restaurant and Haihua Restaurant, some of the smaller options can prove better for the taste buds and the pocketbook. Below we have listed five restaurants that run the spectrum of eating on the street, including a couple of newcomers.

By James Liu



# Variety Is the Spice of Life

Photos by Zhuang Jian



## Beijing Shuwang Hotpot

By Zhang Bo

First opened in Sichuan in 1993, Shuwang Hotpot expanded to a site at Liangma Qiao in Beijing in 2001, and quickly won a reputation as one of the best hotpot joints in the city. It moved to Xiaoyun Lu in May 2002, but the quality of food has not changed.

The outside is decorated in a classical, simple style, overshadowed by a huge red sign and glowing red lanterns. The inside is broken into a main room and seven private rooms, all furnished in classical Chinese style and with total space for nearly 400 diners.

Liu Xiaoyan, vice manager of the restaurant, says, "True to our Sichuan inspiration, this restaurant boasts special hotpot bases unheard of in Beijing." One highly recommended broth concoction is the *yuanyang guo* (mandarin duck broth, 30 yuan), a novel take on the half-spicy, half-not base. The savory *yan-grou tangguo* (mutton broth, 56 yuan) is made from select mutton and a secret spice mixture. A more exotic option is the *zibu jiayu guo* (turtle broth), which is rich in nutrients thanks to a soft-shelled turtle and medicinal herbs, though it does come at high price of 128 yuan.

To round out a hotpot meal, the restaurant offers a wide range of Sichuan-style cold dishes and pastry snacks. Another house specialty is 10 kinds of homemade tonic liquor, which can be ordered by number. Prices for the pungent medicinal brews average around 10 yuan for 50 grams.

**Add:** No.15 Xiaoyun Lu, Chaoyang  
**Open:** 11 am - 12 pm **Tel:** 6460-8473  
**Average cost:** 30 yuan per person



## Sanyang Kaitai Huangjiuguan

By Guo Yuandan

The year of the goat is as good a time as ever to feast on some sheep, and this restaurant is a great place to munch mutton and wash it down with some *huangjiu* rice wine, for a warming, soothing meal.

Booze is the major theme of the décor, with red lanterns painted with the character for wine hanging on the walls and jars of *huangjiu* on the windowsills.

*Huangjiu*, normally simply called rice wine or yellow wine for its brownish-yellow color, is a traditional Chinese alcohol made from glutinous rice and savored for its mellow taste and rich fragrance. Besides being delicious, *huangjiu* has positive effects on the stomach and spleen and is often used in medicinal concoctions. This restaurant offers 38 kinds of the brew, hailing from Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province, and Jimo, Shandong Province. Both areas have been producing *huangjiu* for millennia. Prices range from 25 yuan to 1,200 yuan per bottle for top-of-the-line Jimo *huangjiu*.

The kitchen specializes in mutton dishes of Xinjiang and Inner Mongolian style. Three recommended choices are fried mutton chops (*kao yangpai*, 50 yuan), stewed mutton for eating by hand (*shouzhuarou*, 38 yuan for a large plate), and roasted leg of lamb (*kao yangtui*, 65 yuan), which is marinated before being roasted to tender perfection.

**Add:** No. 32 Xiaoyun Lu, Chaoyang **Open:** 9 am - 9:30 pm **Tel:** 6464 5855 **Average cost:** 80 yuan per person



## Cooking Chinese at Home

## Braised Eggplant, Beijing Style

By Wesley Lei

**Ingredients:** 250 grams eggplant; 250 ml vegetable oil for deep-frying (hint: one tablespoon is equal to around 15 ml); 1 tbsp soy sauce; 1/2 tbsp scallions, chopped; 1/2 tbsp salt; 1/2 tbsp fresh ginger, chopped; 2 tbsp cornstarch, dissolved in 2 tbsp water; 2 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed; 1 tbsp sesame oil

**Instructions:** Peel the eggplant and cut into slices about 1/2 inch (1 centimeter) thick. Score the slices on one side about 1/8 inch deep and cut into 1 1/4 inch strips. Heat the oil in a wok until a piece of scallion green or ginger moves quickly when tossed into the oil and a haze appears above the oil surface. Add the eggplant and deep-fry until brown. Remove and drain well. Blend the soy sauce, salt, scallions, ginger, the cornstarch-water mixture and five additional teaspoons of water into a sauce. Pour all but two teaspoons of the oil from the wok into a container for disposal. Reheat remaining oil over high heat until oil surface ripples. Add the garlic and quickly stir-fry until fragrant. Add the eggplant strips and the sauce. Bring to a boil and cook, stirring, until the sauce thickens. Sprinkle with the sesame oil, remove, and serve. Serves four.



## Bellagio (Lugang Xiaozhen)

By Zhang Bo

The name Bellagio may first conjure images of the famed,

high-end Las Vegas hotel, known for its sumptuous buffets and huge Picasso collection. Among some Beijingers, however, better known is a local restaurant



Kejia xiaochao, 33 yuan

of the same name, also known as Lugang Xiaozhen, which has drawn a loyal following with its comfortable feel and outstanding Taiwan-style fare.

Since opening last September, the two-storey restaurant has proven popular, in part because of its lively décor that features beaded curtains, soft silk, fresh flowers and mirrors.

Among the kitchen's specialties are Hakka (*kejia*) dishes, such as the *kejia xiaochao* (traditional Hakka dish, 33 yuan), made of fried pork, dried squid, bean curd and celery. The *san-beiji* (three cups chicken, 45 yuan) is a tempting dish of chicken cooked in a combination of wine, soy sauce and sesame oil. A strange-sounding but savory Taiwanese classic is coke pork (*Taiwan kongrou*), which costs 22 yuan.

After dinner, customers can cool down with a popular Taiwanese dessert of shaved ice (*paobing*).

This refreshing treat is made of tiny ice chunks covered in fruit, beans and sweet sauce, available in several versions ranging in price from 18 to 29 yuan.

Choices include the Bellagio breeze (*zong-hebing*, 25 yuan), which comes topped with red beans, pineapple and tapioca pearls, a mixture that tastes better than it may sound.

Another Taiwan-style iced snack on offer is the mango smoothie (*manguo bingsha*, 22 yuan), also made with shaved ice, this time topped with fresh mango.

**Add:** No. 35 Xiaoyun Lu, Chaoyang **Open:** 11 am - 4 am **Tel:** 8451 9988 **Average cost:** 20 yuan per person and up



## Jams

## Lucky Band

Tonight Sick Pupa (*Bing Yong*) bring heavy rap metal in baggy jeans. Grunge outfit Cold Blooded Animal (*Lengxue Dongwu*) returns to the stage with a new lineup. Kou Zhengyu will perform at his birthday party on March 30.

**Where:** Get Lucky, 500 meters east of the south gate of University of International Business and Economics, Chaoyang **When:** 9:30 pm **Admission:** adults 40 yuan, students 30 yuan **Tel:** 6429 9109

## What at What

Convenience Store (*Bianli Shang-dian*) will be on stage tonight. Sand Bands (*Shazi*) will warm up the crowd.

**Where:** What, opposite north gate of University of International Business and Economics, Chaoyang **When:** 9 pm **Admission:** 20 yuan **Tel:** 13910 209249

## London's Hottest DJ CI

DJ C1, able to fuse house, techno, Latin and disco, will be playing a house set tonight and a techno set on Saturday.

**Where:** The Club, 43 north Sanlitun Nanli, Chaoyang **When:** March 28-29, 8 pm **Admission:** 150 yuan (advance, includes both gigs) **Tel:** 13311 120235, 13001 135089

## Movies



Colin Farrell busts a move

## The Recruit

Directed by Roger Donaldson, starring Al Pacino, Colin Farrell, Bridget Moynahan and Gabriel Macht. After completing his studies at MIT, James Clayton, a brilliant young man, is tapped to join the elite branch of American intelligence. He accepts the offer and is soon sent to the CIA's secret training camp, only to discover how complex and dangerous the job can really be in this suspense-drama. In Chinese.

**Where:** local cinemas **When:** till March 31

## I Love You

Directed by Zhang Yuan, starring Xu Jinglei, Dong Dawei, Du Xuebing and Pai Juan. Based on the novel by Wang Shuo. The story follows the trials and tribulations of a normal couple after they get married. In Chinese.

**Where:** Space for Imagination, 5 Xiwangzhuang, Haidian **When:** March 29, 7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6279 1280



Actor: Xu Jinglei

## Hero

Directed by Zhang Yimou, starring Jet Lee, Zhang Ziyi, Tony Leung, Maggie Cheung, Chen Daoming. Nominated for the Oscar for Best Foreign Film. Chinese with English subtitles.

**Where:** Cherry Lane Movies, 29 Liangmaqiao Lu **When:** March 28-29, 8 pm **Admission:** 40 yuan **Tel:** 6430 1398 **Email:** rex@cherrylanemovies.com.cn

## First Documentary Film Exchange Week

A festival of influential Chinese films. The directors will be on hand for question and answer sessions after the films.

**Where:** Beijing Normal University **When:** March 30, (9:30-12 am, 12:30-5 pm, 5:30-8:30 pm) **Tel:** 6206 1271

**Where:** Wangfujing Bookstore **When:** March 30 - April 1, (9:30-12 am, 12:30-5 pm, 5:30-8:30 pm) **Tel:** 6206 1271

**Where:** Fourth Floor of the China National Library **When:** March 29 - April 1, (9:30-12 am, 12:30-5 pm, 5:30-8:30 pm) **Tel:** 62061271

## West of the Tracks (Tie Xi Qu)

A three-part documentary by independent Chinese filmmaker Wang Bing. Filmed over a two-year period in the Tie Xi industrial district, one of the hardest-hit areas of northeastern China's "rust belt", *West of Tracks* explores the lives, loves, livelihoods, aspirations and frustrations of Chinese factory workers and their families. The director will talk with the audience after the screening.

**Where:** Jiangwen Hall of Beijing Normal University **When:** March 29, 10 pm **Admission:** 10 yuan **Tel:** 8235 8193



Three is not always a crowd

## Lover's Concerto

Directed by Lee Han, starring Lee Eun-joo, Cha Tae-hyun, Son Ye-jin, Moon Kuen-young. A story between a boy and two girls. Korean with Chinese subtitles.

**Where:** Fifth floor Hyundai Millennium Tower, 38 Xiaoyunlu, Chaoyang **When:** April 4, 5:30 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8453 8112

## Music

## Beethoven Showcased

Performed by the China Philharmonic Orchestra. The program includes Beethoven's *Piano Concerto No. 4 in G Major, Opus 58*, and *Symphony No. 4 in flat B Major, Opus 60*. Ryusuke Numajiri will conduct, Michel Bourdoncel will play the piano.

**Where:** Poly Theater, Dongsì Shitiao **When:** March 30, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 50-380 yuan **Tel:** 6500 1188 ext. 5176

## Russian Poems

The Siberian Philharmonic Orchestra will play works of famous composers, including Tchaikovsky. Dozens of Chinese film actors such as Song Chunli, Ju Xue, and Xu Tao will recite Russian poems by Pushkin and others.

**Where:** Great Hall of the People **When:** March 28-29, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 80-680 yuan **Tel:** 8581 2828

## Chamber Music Concert

Performed by the China Youth Chamber Orchestra. Forty young musicians will feature many classical works at home and abroad, including *Nice Night* and *Homesick Tunes*, and excerpts from *Suan Lake* by Tchaikovsky and *Symphony No 10* by Mendelssohn. Conducted by He Rong.

**Where:** Concert Hall of the China National Library, Zhongguancun Nadajie **When:** March 30, 2:30 pm **Admission:** 10-30 yuan **Tel:** 8854 5731

## Stringed Instruments Concert

Performed by the Taipei Liuqin Chamber Orchestra. Musicians including Zhang Xinhua, Lei Qun'an and others from the Chinese mainland and Taiwan will hold a concert featuring plucked stringed instruments. The program includes *Nights in the Outskirts of Moscow*, *Merry Bordering Town*, *Camel Bells on the Silk Road*, *Songs with No Words*, *Love Songs in the Torch Festival*, *Northern People's Life Sketches: Horse Racing, Reindeer Shepherd, Fishing and Hunting*.

**Where:** Concert Hall of the China National Library, Zhongguancun Nadajie **When:** March 30, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 30-200 yuan **Tel:** 8854 5731

## Activities

## Rolling Stones Charity Dinner

The Stones will attend a charity dinner, the proceeds of which will go to the China Disabled People's Performance Art Troupe, which will perform at the event. The ticket price includes dinner, a Rolling Stones Lick world tour souvenir, a ticket to their Beijing show and a copy of their new CD.

**Where:** Beijing Hotel Ballroom **When:** April 2, 7 pm **Admission:** 6,000 yuan for groups of 10 **Tel:** 8463 7907, 6554 1021

## Easter Fun at Big Easy

Lots of surprises, fun and games for all, and a special Easter egg hunt for the little ones. Top that off with a delightful Easter Sunday barbecue brunch, with kids under one meter tall eating free.

**Where:** Big Easy, South gate of Chaoyang park **When:** April 1, 11 am **Admission:** 98 yuan **Tel:** 6508 6776

## Exhibitions

## Wang Chang Solo Exhibition

Wang Chang from Heilongjiang is an oil painter and creator of such works as the "*Impressions of Southern Anhui*" and "*Baihua Tree*" series.

**Where:** Creation Gallery, north end of Ritan Donglu **When:** March 29 - April 6, 10 am - 7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8561 7570.

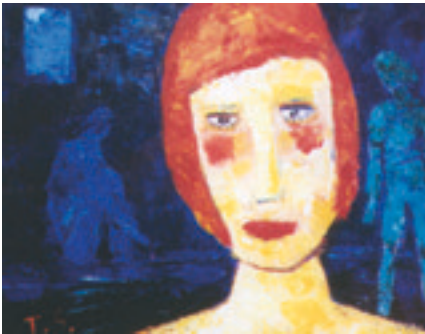


Painting by Liu Ding

## Liu Ding and Yu Fan

Liu Ding's cool obsession with pill capsules extends not only to their texture, colour and shape, but also to how necessary they have become in modern society. Sculptor Yu Fan currently teaches sculpting at the Central Academy of Fine Arts.

**Where:** China Art Archives and Warehouse **When:** till April 1, 2-5 pm (Wednesday - Sunday) **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8456 5152



Woman by Tatjana Semane

## Painting Exhibition

A show of 59 oil paintings by Tatjana Semane of Latvia.

**Where:** Classical Gallery, B1 East Gate Plaza, No 29, Dongzhong Jie, Dongcheng **When:** till March 30, 10 am - 6 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6418 3012



Columbia River by Yu Jiantao

## Joint Watercolor Exhibition

Over 40 watercolor paintings and selected works by Huang Youwei, Jiang Chun and Yu Jiantao. Huang Youwei is skilled in depicting hutongs, water villages of southern China and flowers. Dalian native Yu Jiantao focuses on the sea, trees and small islands.

**Where:** Wunfung Gallery, 136 Nanchizi Dajie **When:** till April 8, 10 am - 7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6523 3320

## Oil and Wash Painting

Fresco painter Liu Xiaohui and oil painter Jiang Fang are both graduates of the Central Academy of Fine Arts. Liu depicts landscapes and still lives with some abstract qualities. Jiang uses exaggerated forms and thick colors to create a romantic, girlish feel.

**Where:** TAO Gallery, second floor of Zhongliang Plaza, 8 Jiangguomennei Dajie **When:** March 29 - April 18 **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8511 8611



Calligraphy by Wang Liang

## Calligraphy Exhibition

Works by Wang Liang. **Where:** Melodic Art Gallery, 14 Jiangguomenwei Dajie, Dongcheng **When:** April 1-30, 9 am - 5 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6515 8123

## Sports

## Spring Run

The 2003 Stratus Cup Spring Run will be held on March 29. The race will be split into two categories, a five kilometer run open to people aged eight to 80, and a 10 kilometer race for those 16 to 55. All participants will get specially numbered T-shirts. Winners will receive special certificates. Registration is open until March 28.

**Where:** North gate of Worker's Stadium, Chaoyang **When:** March 29, 8:30 am **Admission:** 50 yuan **Tel:** 6567 0266

## Overnight Hike

The Wu Tongling Nature reserve is a wonderful place with soaring cliffs, streams, ponds, woods, beautiful rocks and peaks. Most of the second day's trek will be downhill. On the first day expect some serious hiking (up a 1,000 meter-high peak). This A to B hike is 15 kilometers in distance. It is a long walk but not difficult.

A guest house will offer shared rooms, clean bedding, nice duvets and comfortable beds. A picnic lunch and drinks will be prepared for Saturday, fruit and trail mix for Sunday, with Saturday dinner and Sunday breakfast at the hotel.

**Where:** Huairou, north of Beijing **When:** March 29-30, meet Saturday 8:30 am outside Starbucks at Lido Hotel, or 9 am at Capital Paradise front gate, return Sunday, 5 pm **Admission:** 500 yuan, including round trip transport, snacks and beverages, food and accommodation, detailed map of the hike and professional guidance **Tel:** 13701 003694

**Email:** bjhikers@yahoo.co.uk



Hot action on the ice

## 2003 IIHF World Women's Championships

Founded in 1908, the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF), is an organization of member national hockey associations governing the sport of ice hockey and in-line hockey for both men and women. The 2003 International Ice Hockey Federation Women's Competition is to be held April 3-9 in China for the first time. Athletes from eight countries including China, USA, Russia, Sweden, Canada, Finland, Germany and Switzerland will be divided into two groups to compete. There will be altogether 20 games in the competition.

**Where:** Capital Gymnasium **When:** April 3-9 **Admission:** 20-30 yuan **Tel:** 6406 8888

## Lecture

## Getting to know "Classic of Mountains and Seas" (Shanhaijing)

Expert Wang Hongqi will draw on his 30 years of research to introduce the first comprehensive book on China's geography, dating back 4,000 years. His survey records land resources and distribution of minorities in China, and a large-scale map and videos will be used for illustration. English translation provided.

**Where:** Lee's Antique Carpets, Liangmaqiao Lu, close to 21st Century Hotel **When:** March 29, 2:30-4:30 pm **Admission:** adults 40 yuan, students 30 yuan **Tel:** 8462 2081

## The Truth about Eunuchs

"The Truth About Eunuchs" is an attempt by well-known historical writer Roy Bates to clear the air about many of the many misconceptions that exist about Chinese eunuchs. He will explain what a eunuch was, the effects of castration, what the emperors used them for and why, and where they came from. Were they all villains, as Chinese scholar-officials made out? Come along and hear the truth. The talk will be illustrated by many pictures.

**Where:** Jiazu Tea House, hidden in a hutong close to the west side of Beijing Grand Hotel, Nanheyuan Jie **When:** March 2:30-4 pm **Admission:** adults 40 yuan, students 30 yuan (including tea) **Tel:** 13051 299897

## Stage

## Opera from Henan

Eleven shows from Henan Province will be performed in three forms at the 2003 Henan Local Operas Festival. The three operas are Yu Ju, Qu Ju and Yue Diao. The plays vary greatly, not only in terms of traditional and historical themes, but also in depicting ordinary people in cities and the new lives of villagers in the countryside.

**Where:** Grand Chang'an Theatre, Jianguomennei Dajie **When:** April 4-25 **Tel:** 6510 1380

## Opera and Folk Music

Nightly shows of Chinese performance arts, like opera, folk music, magic and acrobatics, served with tea and Beijing-style snacks. English subtitles provided.

**Where:** Lao She Teahouse, southwest of Qianmen **When:** 7:50-9:20 pm **Admission:** 40-130 yuan **Tel:** 6302 1717



## Lady In the Dark

Music by Kurt Weill, lyrics by Ira Gershwin, based on the book by Moss Hart. Fashion editor Liza Elliott has reached the pinnacle of success, but profound unhappiness leads her to psychoanalysis, and into a tempest of haunting dreams. Fully staged, sung in English. This show won the London Evening Standard award for Best Musical in 1997.

**Where:** Century Theater **When:** April 3-5, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 60-500 yuan **Tel:** 6466 3311



Love affairs of two generations

## Thunderstorm

Based on the original work of famous Chinese playwright Cao Yu, this tragic story traces the complex love affairs and incest among two generations of the family of coal mine owner Zhou Puyuan. The cast includes Chinese stars such as Li Moran, Zhu Lin, Xi Meijuan, Pu Cunxin, Zhang Kaili, Xu Fan, Wei Ji'an.

**Where:** Capital Theater **When:** April 2-5, 7:15 pm **Admission:** 180-800 yuan **Tel:** 6528 7673 ext. 198

## Service

The Bayley & Jackson Medical Centre provides comprehensive health care services with a focus on the treatment of chronic disease, dentistry, special care and family medicine. Staffed by medical professional from Australia, New Zealand, the UK, the US and Canada. The center provides 24-hour emergency service and multi-language service.

**Where:** 7 Ritan Donglu, Chaoyang **Tel:** 8562 9998

## Parties

## Music and Dance Night

Dress up and get down to the grooves with Beijing's hottest DJs. Make-up artists, fashion advisors and disco divas will be on hand to advise on how to get authentic 70s and 80s looks and moves.

**Where:** Yan Club, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang **When:** March 29, 8 pm **Admission:** 30 yuan (includes transportation to and from Workers' Stadium) **Tel:** 8457 3506

We are glad to receive your feedback. We will print employment, language exchange and accommodation info for individuals. Feel free to email us at bjtodayinfo@ynet.com or call 6590 2522

By Guo Yuandan





Dhuruv Dev Singh takes a yoga class at the Zen Palace

Photo by Yan Tong

# Contortions for a Healthy Mind and Body

By James Liu

The word “yoga” probably conjures up images of hippies, or of bodies contorted into impossible, and what by rights should be incredibly painful positions, or both. It is not a pastime sane people should contemplate. But according to visiting Indian guru and yoga instructor Dhuruv Dev Singh, such stereotypes are far from the truth.

Originating in India, yoga is a psycho-physical discipline with a history of around 5,000 years. Since 1999, when the first class opened in Beijing, it has become a popular activity at gyms and fitness centers around town.

Zhu Lingyan, a yoga instructor at Zen Place and translator for Dhuruv Dev Singh, told *Beijing Today*, “Today, most yoga practices in Beijing focus on the physical postures called ‘asanas’,



breathing exercises called ‘pranayama’ and meditation.”

Although there are many schools of yoga, the differences are usually of emphasis, such as focusing on strict alignment of the body, coordination of breath and movement, holding the postures, or the flow from one posture to another. All the schools share a common lineage. Among the many branches and paths, Hatha yoga, which focuses on postures and breathing, with the emphasis on self-control, is the most popular form.

Zhu studied yoga at Hanuman Vyayam Prasarak Mandal University in Maharashtra State, India, from August to December last year. She says that as she studied, she found yoga to be not just a way of exercise, but a lifestyle. Every night she sleeps on her back “in a yoga way,” and every morning she “gets up in a yoga way,” stretching her back muscles before standing up.

Singh told *Beijing Today* that in India, yoga tends to focus more on balance in mind. “The difference between yoga and normal exercise lies in the idea of focusing one’s awareness on what he is doing and how he feels as he performs the postures in yoga,” says Singh. “Traditional

exercise is goal oriented. Weight training, for example, makes you stronger by breaking down and rebuilding muscle tissue. It’s this breaking down and rebuilding that results in the bulky muscle look. Yoga increases strength by toning the muscles.”

Yoga practitioners often say the word “Om” during meditation. Om is a Sanskrit word, believed to give voice to the vibrations of the universe, channeling energy from the surrounding environment.

According to Singh, yoga can relieve tension, headache, cold and flu symptoms, and even, believe it or not, works as an alternative to Viagra, enhancing men’s sex lives by improving cardiovascular health and reducing anxiety. “So in China, men should not regard yoga is a sport

## MUSEUM WATCH

By Guo Yuandan

Artists He Yang and Wu Xi opened their first private painting museum in a *siheyuan*, or courtyard house, located in Chaonei Douban Hutong, Dongcheng, in 1996.

When the courtyard house was demolished, the husband and wife team relocated the museum to their family home in a small village on the outskirts of Beijing.

Over 60 paintings in the museum represent the artists’ different styles and themes over different periods.

He Yang, a member of the Chinese Artists’ Association, started learning traditional Chinese painting as a child. By the age of 15, he had begun exhibiting his paintings. Now 47 years old, He Yang’s style has gradually become less imbued in traditionalism. His work *The Hot Spring of Matrilineal Commune Moso* won the first Excellent Work of Art in the National Competition of Folk Painting award in 1990.

Wu Xi is also member of the Chinese Artists’ Association. She studied under traditional Chinese painting masters Ye Qianyu, Li Kuchan and Cui Zifan. In her work Wu pays more attention to the union of traditional Chinese spirit and modern people’s feelings. Her work *Gentle Night View* was selected as an exhibit for the Monte Carlo International Exhibition of Modern Arts.

**Where:** He Yang & Wu Xi Modern Painting Museum, 1128 Changdian Village, Jinzhan Township, Chaoyang **Open:** open daily **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8431 2537

## Modern Painting Museum



Jiaolin Daijiamei by Wu Xi



Kamengla by He Yang

Photos by Cui Hao

## WALL WALKS

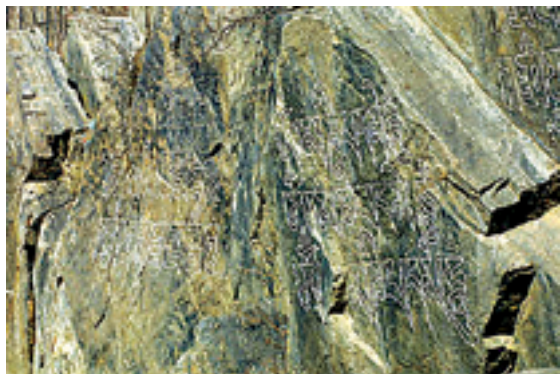
# Baimaguan Fort

By Lisa Huang

The Miyun section of Great Wall is just over 200 kilometers long. It features over 500 guard and beacon towers, as well as a number of famous forts, such as Qiangzilu, Gubeikou and Baimaguan. With a few exceptions, ruins are all that remain of most of these structures.

Baimaguan (白马关) Fort, near the town of Fanzipai (番字牌乡), was built during the reign of Emperor Yongle (1402-1424) of the Ming Dynasty. Little of the original structure remains, except for the south gate. It is an arched gate, 120 meters wide and 80 meters deep. The characters Bai Ma Guan Bao are inscribed on a stone tablet above the arch. The tablet is somewhat different from similar ones found at other forts, in that the four characters are arranged vertically in two lines, “Bai Ma” on the right and “Guan Bao” on the left.

Besides the gate, there are two sections of walls that once surrounded the fort still standing, Yidaobian (一道边) and Erdaobian



Fanzipai

(二道边). Erdaobian is the outer wall, including eastern and western sections. The east part is only about 50 meters long, stopped by a cliff; while the 200-meter western part extends along a 40 to 50 degree slope, near which the remains of two guard towers can be made out. A little way south of Erdaobian is Yidaobian, the main body of the Baimaguan Great Wall.

Baima means “white horse.” According to local legend, many years ago, a fierce and strong white horse lived on the nearby Yema Chuan (Wild Horse Mountain), terrorizing the local villagers. One day, Yang Yanzhao, a famous

general of the Song Dynasty, passed by the mountain and saw the horse playing in the river. He jumped onto the horse’s back and after a long struggle, eventually succeeded in taming it. From then on, it accompanied Yang and his troops on campaigns all over the country.

At that time, the kingdom of Liao frequently invaded the Song’s northern frontier, threatening the country’s security. In order to stop the Liao’s aggression, Yang left the horse on the Great Wall. When invading Liao soldiers saw it, they assumed Yang and his troops were stationed there, and would beat a hasty retreat. Hence the name of

the fort.

To the north of Fanzipai Town stands a solitary hill, on one side of which is a stone precipice bearing numerous unidentified inscriptions that is called Fanzipai (番字牌). No one knows for sure when they were made or what they mean. Some say they are a mixture of Tibetan, Mongolian and other scripts, while others contend they are some form of Buddhist scriptures.



only for women,” he says. “If you can do (yoga) everyday — great. If not, try and do it a few days a week. Any yoga is better than no yoga, and 20 to 30 minutes a day is better than 90 minutes once a week.”

**Do’s and don’ts for yoga class:**

Do let your teacher know about injuries or conditions that might affect your practice. If you are suffering from an injury or tired, skip poses you cannot or should not do, or try a modified version.

Don’t eat for two or three hours before class. If one practices yoga on a full stomach, one might experience cramps, nausea, or vomiting, especially when performing twists, deep forward bends, and inversions.

Do be quiet. It’s great to share a class with people, but it can be distracting to yourself and others to have

an extended or loud conversation.

Don’t bring papers or cell phones to class. Leave socializing and business outside the studio, so the peace of the practice is not disturbed.

Do review the poses you practiced, and note any instructions.

Don’t push it by trying to go as deeply or completely into a pose as others might be able to do.

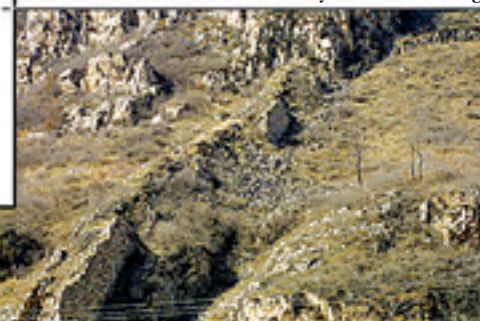
## The Zen Place

**Where:** Room 7631, Xingyuan Office Building, 7 Xiagongfu Jie, Dongcheng **Tel:** 8511 4948 **Cost:** 80 yuan for 75 minutes Classes conducted in Chinese

## Yoga Yard

**Where:** Guigongfu Courtyard, 11 Fangjiayuan Hutong, Dongcheng **Tel:** 8511 5929 **Cost:** 80 yuan for 90 minutes Classes conducted in English

Photos by Zou Ge Bu Ting



## Getting there:

Take the Beijing-Miyun road to Miyun, then the Miyun-Xiwengzhuang (西翁庄) road, which will take you to Fanzipai and Baimaguan Village.